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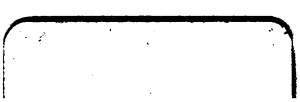

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MONTALBERT.

A NOVEL.

VOL. III.

MONTALBERT.

A NOVEL.

BY CHARLOTTE SMITH.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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MONTALBERT.

CHAPTER XXV.

IT appears as if the fears, which had diſtreſſed Roſalie, had in ſome degree ſubſided when ſhe thus proceeded with her narrative, or rather journal:——

"*April* 11*th*, 1783.

"It is now above a fortnight ſince I have been here. Every day has appeared more melancholy than that which preceded it; for every day and every hour diminiſhes my hope that Montalbert is

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engaged in ſeeking me..... Alas! could his vigilant love be deceived, or would not Signora Belcaſtro betray herſelf, had ſhe been queſtioned?—Ah! fool that I am! I recollect that he could not queſtion her; that he certainly could never know from her that Roſalie exiſts—Alozzi too is intereſted in deceiving him—perhaps we ſhall never meet again..... Montalbert! perhaps I am doomed to paſs here, in this dreadful ſolitude, a long and wretched life. It is now four days ſince I prevailed on Cattina to let me wander over the deſerted grounds that were once a garden; ſhe finds I make no attempt to abuſe this indulgence, and ſhe does not now interdict the woods that ſurround the encloſure, or even the ſea ſhore, though it is there only that I am likely to meet any of the few human beings who inhabit this depopulated region. I have been down to the ſands, and on the wave-worn remains of a marble column, once, perhaps, the ornament of the port; I have been ſitting to look at the ſea. A very few

days

days ſince I ſhould not have ventured hither, for then my imagination was filled with the fears that Cattina had ſo recently taught me, of Corſairs and Turks. By habit, and from having aſſured myſelf, by ſubſequent converſations, that Cattina had exaggerated and miſdated her accounts, I had appeaſed thoſe apprehenſions, or learned to think of them with more ſteadineſs: nor, indeed, could my walks increaſe, whatever real danger there might be, ſince, during the day time, any veſſel would be diſcerned from the coaſt long before it could land its crew. I ſaw to-day a group of peaſant girls picking up the ſmall fiſh along the ſand; they were gay and ſportive, and ſeemed to have no fear of ſuch viſits as Cattina has deſcribed to me as frequently happening. I wiſhed to have ſpoken to them; but, perhaps, I ought to conſider it as a part of my convention with Cattina, not to enter into converſation with any of the perſons I may chance to meet.—Alas! theſe poor

Calabreſe could be of no uſe to me: they ſeemed to have no ideas beyond the little circle of their own neceſſities or pleaſures; for though they muſt have known me to be a ſtranger, I excited no curioſity. Their happy indifference brought to my mind days when I was as thoughtleſs and as light-hearted as theſe ſimple peaſants! That reflection was followed by the recollection of the circumſtances that have happened to me within theſe laſt two years, and the chain of events, which, from one of the happieſt, had reduced me to one of the moſt miſerable of women. My waking dream laſted till the ſun was ſet; the waves, as well as the whole horizon, aſſumed that roſy hue which mocks alike the pencil and the pen; I had heard that the exhalations from the marſhes were unwholeſome after a warm day, and I returned to my melancholy reſidence leſt my child ſhould ſuffer. Now, Montalbert, that he is ſleeping by me, I relate on paper the ſad employment of my ſolitary day—

day—alas! how many more may paſs in the ſame manner—what a proſpect is mine!

" It is night.—I go to my window and look at the ſtars, which, in this clear atmoſphere, are ſingularly brilliant. I ſeek the north ſtar, becauſe, Montalbert, I believe that you are in England—an idea that ſometimes torments and ſometimes ſooths me; yet I encourage it even when I am moſt pained by it, for you have returned thither, perhaps, if not to ſeek your Roſalie, to weep with her mother for her ſuppoſed death.....That dear mother!—ah! how many tears have I already coſt her—how many will ſhe ſhed over my imaginary grave; while I, buried yet living, call on her name—on yours, Montalbert, in vain!

" Perhaps it is fit we ſhould ſuffer thus—perhaps it is the proper puniſhment for our diſobedience.....Oh! if it be ſo, may I alone be purſued by the vengeance of Heaven, and may that little innocent creature be ſpared and reſtored to the

protection of his father. It is possibly to me, to my rash folly, that Montalbert owes much of his present uneasiness: his mother may have driven him from her with reproaches, with anger—he may, on my account, be loaded with a parent's curse!——Dreadful thought! I dare not dwell upon it.

"I cast my eyes round the high and gloomy room where I sit: all is silent and forlorn; cold and faint, my heart seems to sink within me, and I listen, with even a degree of eagerness, to hear the slow footsteps of Cattina, along the apartments, bringing me my evening meal.

"My keeper, for what else can I call her, is gone; she seems every day to soften in her manners towards me, and especially since she finds my child is to be brought up in the religion of his father. Poor prejudiced woman; but she has no bad heart, and there is something respectable even in her prejudices. I compared to her, this evening, of the langour I felt for want of some amusement wh

child ſlept; and I aſked if there were no books to be obtained here?—It was ſome time before I could make her underſtand my queſtion. At length, however, ſhe told me, that at the farther end of the caſtle, in a room which is never opened, there are a great many papers, and ſhe believes books; ſhe promiſes to ſhew it me to-morrow. I may meet with ſome Italian poets, who may beguile thoſe tedious minutes in which I am now tortured with my own thoughts. How well I remember, at Barlton Brooks, exploring the library of Mr. Leſſington, and with as little ſucceſs as I ſhall probably have to-morrow.

"But talking to this woman has a little relieved my ſpirits; for even the ſound of a human voice is conſoling to my ear!

"I will now endeavour to ſleep..... Oh, come! thou image of my adored Montalbert—not as laſt night, in imaginary danger and contention, and riſquing, for my defence, a life more precious than my own—but come to whiſper peace and hope

to the dreams of your devoted Roſalie!—Ah! would I could be aſſured that you will ever read my journal; that your eye will ever mark where the tears have bliſtered the paper as I write this, perhaps, fruitleſs wiſh!

"*April* 18*th.*

"I look back at my journal of yeſterday, and of the preceding day, and am half-tempted to give up this monotonous account of lingering anguiſh. I have learned nothing by my reſearch after books, but the great extent of this my priſon, and that it is Formiſcuſa, a caſtle ſituated ſeventeen miles from Squilace, and was the ſeat of feudal government, when the Norman Barons poſſeſſed this country. A rude map or chart, hung up againſt the walls of the room I explored yeſterday, has told me this; but not without my taking ſome pains to get at the intelligence, by clearing away the mould with which it was covered, and, like many others, I have ſought only my own pa

for I now ſee that, from the ſituation of the place, there is but too much reaſon to believe it muſt be, at all times, expoſed to hoſtile viſits from Africa, or Turkey in Europe. I thought I had reaſoned myſelf out of theſe fears, but they return in ſpite of me—ſo prone is the human mind, when under the preſſure of actual evils, to aggravate them by anticipation of the future.

" You would chide me, Montalbert, for any tendency to indulge this diſpoſition.—Ah! wretch that I am, if you were here, ſhould I murmur?—ſhould I dream of evil?——Ah!—no—with you, this ſolitary and frowning pile would be to me a Paradiſe! I ſhould then enjoy the beauty of a country, which, in ſome parts, is really lovely, but over which my eyes now wander often half-blinded by tears.

" Since I have had permiſſion to go out, however, and have walked about the garden, I am better; for there is a charm, in the contemplation of vegetable nature, that ſooths my ſpirits beyond every thing

but muſic..... When poor Roſalie Leſſington was ill at eaſe, at Barlton Brooks, it was a ſeat on the turf of the downs, under the ſhade of an old thorn or a tufted beech, that ſhe retired to ſigh at liberty, though ſhe then hardly knew why ſhe ſighed. Now the really unhappy Roſalie Montalbert, with her infant in her arms, and, ah! with ſenſations how different in her heart, finds a reſting place on the plinth of a broken ſtatue, or on a piece of granite rock, ſhaded with myrtle or embowered in arbutus, and ſurveys, with hopeleſs eyes, the ſun ſinking into the ſea, from whence he will ariſe tomorrow to bring to her another day of tears and deſpair!

" Juſt as I had finiſhed the laſt ſentence, Cattina came to tell me, that a Turkiſh xebec, chaſed by a Malteſe galley, was in ſight; and that I might now be convinced how very near the Barbarians ſometimes approached the ſhore. I trembled, and had hardly ſtrength to follow her up to the weſtern tower, which affords

affords the moſt extenſive view: I ſaw two veſſels, one of which purſued the other, but they were too diſtant for me to diſtinguiſh with what nations they were manned. Soon afterwards, however, they were ſo near that I could diſtinguiſh the form of the Turkiſh veſſel, and ſee the creſcent ſhe bore as an enſign; but fighting did not ſeem to be her purpoſe at that time: for, finding the Malteſe gain upon her, ſhe ſet up more ſail, and made every effort to get away. The enemy, however, purſued, and fired upon her; we heard the report, and ſoon after ſaw the flaſhes of the guns amid clouds of ſmoke; the Corſair returned the fire, but ſtill made off, and, I ſuppoſe having ſome advantage as to lightneſs, ſoon got out of the reach of the firing. At length the xebec became like a doubtful ſpot in the horizon, and then entirely diſappeared; while the Malteſe veſſel, to my great comfort, abandoned the chaſe, yet continued cruizing along the coaſt, as if to protect us againſt the invader, ſhould he dare to return.

" My eyes are affected by gazing ſo long at the dazzling expanſe of ſea, and they and my heart ſtill flutter with apprehenſion. I dread going to bed, for I ſhall fancy I hear hoſtile ſounds in the adjoining rooms, and threatening tones in an unknown language: yet I know theſe pirates are gone, and unlikely now to moleſt us.

" I went down into the garden in hopes of calming my ſpirits before I attempted to ſleep.—Already the heats have tarniſhed the lively verdure of ſpring, and the cicala has begun to devour the leaves; while in England the trees are but juſt budding, and the earlier ſhrubs hardly in leaf. If I were a poet, I ſhould be tempted, were my heart ever for a moment at eaſe, to add one to the number of thoſe who have celebrated, or have attempted to celebrate, the nightingale; for here the note of that bird is infinitely more mellow and delicious than in England. I have been vainly trying to recollect ſome of the moſt beautiful addreſſes to this ſong

of the night, but trouble and anxiety have driven from my memory the few images that, in my circumſcribed reading, I had once collected..... Montalbert! ſhall I ever again be reſtored to happineſs and you?—If ever I am, ſhall I not feel myſelf ſo depreſſed, ſo undone, by this tedious courſe of ſuffering, as to have loſt the few claims I had to your tenderneſs.—Ah! here is another ſource of pain opened—I become a ſelf tormenter. But, conſcious that it is weak, nay, perhaps wicked, I will try to check this continual inclination to repine—I will kneel by my ſleeping infant, and recommend him and Montalbert to the protection of that merciful Being, who preſerved me and my child among the craſh of ruins, and the yawning gulphs that ſurrounded us in Sicily, and who can deliver us from this dreary priſon, and reſtore us to the huſband and the father."

The little narrative of Roſalie was now interrupted.

Wearied

Wearied by the continual ſameneſs of wandering about the fortreſs, where gloomy ſtrength was not allied to ſafety, and where there was no alternative between the ſtagnation of cheerleſs ſolitude and the tremors of fear, (for whenever ſhe converſed with Cattina theſe fears failed not to be renewed), Roſalie, on the day following that of which ſhe has laſt given an account, took a walk hitherto untried, and went down to the village, if a ſmall group of fiſhermen's huts could be called ſo.— Theſe were built with pieces of marble, intermingled with clay, and among them lay ſcattered many remains of magnificent buildings, pieces of large ſtatues, and broken pillars. The idea of the ſplendid works of man fallen to decay, and haſtening to oblivion, yet having ſurvived for ages the beings who toiled to raiſe them, has always ſomething mournful in it to a reflecting mind; and Roſalie was imagining to herſelf how different the appearance of this port muſt have been

ven hundred years ago, when it was crowded with veſſels, and its ſtreets diſplayed all that commerce then procured for the rich and luxurious. Now, ſtrange reverſe! a few half-naked children playing before the humble doors, where their ſun-burnt mothers ſat ſpinning coarſe hemp, or a fiſherman or two puſhing off their barks with the evening tide, to fiſh during the night, on the ſucceſs of which, their principal ſubſiſtence depended, were all the living beings viſible in this obſcure hamlet.

A high mound, riſing in the midſt of the village, had been formed by the fallen ruins of a temple. It was now covered with graſs and low ſhrubs, but through them a marble capital, or an half-buried column, here and there were viſible. On one of theſe laſt Roſalie ſat down to reſt a few moments before ſhe returned home, and was ſometimes indulging the reflections inſpired by the place, ſometimes talking to her child in a low and ſweet voice, when ſhe was ſtartled by the footſteps of a perſon

a perſon on the hollow ground near her; ſhe looked ſuddenly up, and ſaw, not an Algerine pirate, but a gentleman, whom ſhe immediately knew to be an Engliſhman.

Her amazement prevented her either moving or ſpeaking; while the ſtranger, taking off his hat, ſaid—" You muſt forgive me, Madam, if I cannot repreſs my curioſity—I believe you are Engliſh?—I fear I may appear impertinent; but it is impoſſible for me to reſtrain the eager wiſh I have to know by what extraordinary circumſtance I here find a perſon ſo unlike the inhabitants—ſo unlike the objects I came hither to ſeek?"

However reſpectfully this addreſs was made, there were places and occaſions where Roſalie would have reſented it as impertinent; but now, on the deſert coaſt of Calabria, an Engliſhman ſeemed to her as a brother—and the accents of an Engliſh voice, as a voice from Heaven.

She tried, however, in vain to anſwer diſtinctly the unexpected queſtion thus made,

made, and, faltering and trembling, ſaid, in a voice hardly articulate, " I do not wonder, Sir, you are ſurprized at ſeeing me here! I am, indeed, an Engliſh ſtranger, and brought hither by a ſeries of events too long to relate."—At that moment ſhe recollected, that, if ſhe was ſeen ſpeaking to any one, her walks would be put an end to, and her confuſion increaſed. She took courage, however, to add—" I am detained here wholly againſt my inclinations, and deſpair ever to reviſit my native country.....I thank you, Sir, for the intereſt you ſeem to take in my misfortunes; but I dread being ſeen to converſe with -------"

" Haſten then, I conjure you, (cried the Engliſhman), to tell me where you live, and how I can be of uſe to you.... Good God! you are here againſt your inclinations!—But who dares to confine you?—I am a ſtranger to you, Madam, and a mere idle wanderer in this land; but, as a man of your country, you have

a right

a right to all my ſervices—command, and be aſſured I will at leaſt try to obey you."

A ray of hope now darted into the mind of Roſalie. Prepoſſeſſed with an idea that Montalbert was in England, the offers of this gentleman ſeemed to be directed by the interpoſition of Heaven to convey her to him. The tumult of her ſpirits were too great to allow her to reflect on the hazard ſhe might incur by putting herſelf into the power of a ſtranger; the hopes of being conveyed to England, and Montalbert, by his means, abſorbed at that moment every other conſideration: but the more delightful the proſpect was, the more ſhe dreaded its vaniſhing, and this ſhe knew would happen if Cattina diſcovered her talking to any one.

Terrified, therefore, leſt ſhe ſhould be obſerved, ſhe ſaid, in a hurried way—"I am ſo ſituated, that I dare not ſtay to explain who I am, or relate the cauſes that have made me a priſoner in the great caſtle

caſtle you ſee above; but, if you are in the neighbourhood of this place to-morrow-------"

"If I am? (cried the ſtranger eagerly), only tell me where I ſhall ſee you again, and I will wait your own time—I will attend you at the riſk of my life."

"I hope, (interrupted Roſalie tremuloufly)—I hope there will be no riſk..... If you will be, at five o'clock to-morrow evening, in a ſmall wood, which is the boundary of a ſort of garden on the other ſide of the caſtle, near a place where the remains of ſeveral ſtatues ſurround a ruined fountain-------; (ſhe recollected that ſhe was making an aſſignation with a man ſhe had never ſeen before, and ſtopped, for ſhe felt all the impropriety of it; yet, encouraged by her motives and the rectitude of her intentions, ſhe proceeded)——I will be there, and explain to you who I am, and how---- you can oblige me, (ſhe was going to ſay, but again checked herſelf, and only added)—but now it is impoſſible for me to ſtay."

The

The ſtranger repeated her directions with earneſtneſs, and aſſured her he would be there.—" And this lovely child too! (ſaid he, ſtill following her as ſhe turned to go the caſtle), is this too of my country?"—" It is mine, (anſwered Roſalie mournfully); but, indeed, you muſt now leave me, or your obliging offers of ſervice will be fruſtrated."—The gentleman bowed, and ſuffered her to go, following her with his eyes till ſhe reached the buildings adjoining the caſtle, which concealed her from his ſight. He then ſlowly retired, while Roſalie, breathleſs and trembling, ſought her guard, and ſo over-acted her part, by complaining of her ſolitary walks, and affecting her former languor, that a more accurate obſerver than Cattina would have gueſſed that ſome unuſual circumſtance had befallen her.

Cattina had, however, no ſuſpicions, and Roſalie went to her room, and to her reflections on what had paſſed.

She

She endeavoured to recal the perſon, expreſſions, and manner of the ſtranger to whom ſhe had ſpoken, that ſhe might now, in a cooler moment, aſk herſelf whether he appeared to be really a gentleman, and one in whom ſhe ought to repoſe ſo much confidence as to put herſelf under his protection.——He was a young man, apparently not more than two or three and twenty; his countenance was leſs handſome than expreſſive, and there was ſomething remarkable in it, which Roſalie could not define. He had the air and manners of a gentleman; but ſhe knew that many have thoſe advantages whom it would be extreme imprudence to truſt. Perhaps too, notwithſtanding the earneſtneſs with which he offered her any ſervices in his power, he might ſhrink from the trouble and expence of conducting her and her child to England; for young as ſhe was, and little as ſhe had yet ſeen of the world, ſhe was not now to learn that thoſe who

moſt

moſt warmly profeſs friendſhip, are often thoſe who fly from the performance of any kindneſs at all inconvenient to themſelves. Theſe and other reflections half diſcouraged Roſalie from the plan ſhe had formed, in the firſt moments of meeting, with a man who ſeemed to have the power of releaſing her. The diſpoſition of Montalbert forcibly recurred to her; he might be rendered for ever ſuſpicious of her conduct, if ſhe thus raſhly entruſted herſelf to a perſon of whom ſhe could know nothing, and whoſe character might be ſuch as would entirely ruin hers, in the opinion of the world; when it ſhould be known that ſhe had been conducted by him to England.—Yet, on the other hand, in loſing the only opportunity to eſcape that might ever offer, ſhe condemned herſelf and her little boy to perpetual impriſonment, and became acceſſary to her own miſery and that of Montalbert..... Ah! who could tell that he would not, in the perſuaſion

of

of her death, yield to the importunities of his mother, and marry the Roman lady to whom ſhe had ſo long wiſhed to unite him. This idea was as inſupportable as that of his death, and, compared with its being realized, every other evil became light, and every hazard diſappeared.—Sometimes, however, the fear of her huſband's having periſhed at Meſſina obtruded itſelf; but the pains his mother had taken to conceal her argued ſtrongly againſt it. But, even if ſuch a calamity had really happened, it ſeemed to be the duty of his widow to claim the rights of his child, and how could this be done but by having recourſe to her friends in England: for friends, ſhe believed, ſhe had, not only in her mother, who would protect and aſſiſt, though ſhe could not own her, but in Charles Vyvian her real, and William Leſſington her adopted, brother. Towards theſe ſhe thought ſhe might look for protection and kindneſs; and theſe hopes, added to her dread of remaining for life in the melancholy

lancholy and even dangerous ſolitude of Formiſcuſa, determined her, if the ſtranger on their meeting ſtill appeared willing to aſſiſt her, to endeavour, by his means, to reach England.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVI.

So various and contradictory were the thoughts which agitated Roſalie during the night, that ſhe found it impoſſible to ſleep; ſhe aroſe with the earlieſt dawn, and, though ſo many hours were to intervene before that of her appointment, ſhe could not forbear going to the place ſhe had marked to her new friend for their meeting, that ſhe might be ſure ſhe had deſcribed it accurately. She returned, however, almoſt immediately to the houſe, for, conſcious of having ſomething to hide, ſhe now feared Cattina might ſuſpect her.

From the windows towards the ſea ſhe now again ſaw the Malteſe galley, which had been ſome days hovering on the coaſt. It caſt anchor near the ſhore, a

boat put off from it, and landed behind a ſmall promontory, which formed one ſide of the port. It now occurred to Roſalie, that there was ſome connection between the arrival of this veſſel and that of her new acquaintance. He came then from Malta, and was in all probability returning thither. If ſuch was the caſe, how could he charge himſelf with her and her child?—or, admitting he would do ſo, how could ſhe expoſe herſelf to the hazard of traverſing the ſea in a Malteſe veſſel, which, ſhe knew, was liable to be continually engaged by Turkiſh and Algerine pirates. Theſe doubts, added to thoſe ſhe had before, ſerved to agitate her ſpirits ſo much, that, when the hour of appointment came, ſhe had hardly ſtrength to go to the fountain in the wood, where her Engliſh friend had arrived before her.

Roſalie trembled, and looked ſo pale as ſhe advanced towards him, that, alarmed, he ſaid—" I hope, Madam, nothing has happened, ſince I had the honour of meeting

meeting you yeſterday, to give you uneaſineſs?——I hope the favour you do me, by thus condeſcending to come hither---------"

Roſalie, whoſe heart beat ſo violently that ſhe was unable to ſpeak, interrupted him by a deep ſigh, and a faint attempt to articulate "No, Sir! nothing has happened——only I am ſo—ſo—unfortunate, and ſo uncertain what is to become of me, that---------." She could not proceed, but leaned againſt a tree, and tried to recover herſelf, while the ſtranger, who was apprehenſive ſhe would faint, led her towards a piece of broken marble, and entreated her to ſit down upon it; ſhe did ſo, and, in a ſhort time, aſſured him ſhe was better, and begged his pardon for the weakneſs ſhe had betrayed.

"I own, Madam, (ſaid the ſtranger), that my curioſity is very ſtrongly excited, and that I am impatient to know how I can be ſervicable to you? I might claim a ſort of privilege to be admitted to your confidence, becauſe I am of the ſame na-

tion; but I rather reſt my plea on the earneſt inclination I feel to be employed in your ſervice: if, as I fear, you are unhappy, and ſuffering from the tyranny of ſome relation----------." The ſtranger heſitated, as if uncertain how to proceed on a ſubject that might be of a very delicate nature, and, from his manner, it ſtruck Roſalie as if he thought ſhe was confined by her huſband—an impreſſion which might involve her in very diſagreeable conſequences. She, therefore, took courage to ſay—" It is true I am a priſoner at this place, and am moſt deſirous of being releaſed, in hopes of being reſtored to my huſband, who would, I am ſure, be very grateful to any one who undertook to aſſiſt me in regaining my liberty—if (added ſhe) he ſtill lives—as I will not ſuffer myſelf to doubt."

" Good God! (exclaimed the Engliſh ſtranger), by what accident, for it is impoſſible it ſhould be from choice, could a man, happy enough to be your huſband,

allow

allow himſelf to be torn from you; and who can have authority to confine you here?"

"My ſtory is long and extraordinary, (anſwered Roſalie); I can only relate now, that I was ſeparated from my huſband in conſequence of the earthquake which deſtroyed Meſſina, and that his mother, averſe to his marriage with a woman of another religion and country, has taken occaſion to divide us, as ſhe hopes, for ever, by confining me here, and probably by perſuading him that I am no more."

"He is an Italian then?" cried the ſtranger.

"Born of an Italian mother, (replied Roſalie), but his father was an Engliſhman, and of an ancient Engliſh family."—The recollection that Montalbert might at this moment believe her dead, and even be the huſband of another, added to the fear that ſhe was perhaps doing wrong, and putting herſelf into the power of a

man who might take baſe advantages of her confidence, were ſenſations ſo uneaſy, that, loſing the little fortitude ſhe had collected, ſhe burſt into tears.

The gentleman appeared to be really hurt at her diſtreſs; and, lowering his voice, ſaid—" I thank you, Madam, for the confidence you have already placed in me; perhaps I ought not to expect you to truſt me farther, till I tell you who it is that you ſo highly honour, and by what accident I am in a part of Italy ſo ſeldom viſited by Engliſh travellers. But ſuffer me to aſk, if you are now ſecure from the malicious obſervations of this Italian woman, who exerciſes over you tyranny ſo unjuſtifiable?"

" There are only ſervants in the caſtle, (replied Roſalie). My perſecutors deemed them ſufficient for the purpoſe of guarding me in a place ſo remote, that my eſcape ſeemed impoſſible..... I believe they will not moleſt me here, as I am accuſtomed to walk alone of an evening."

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" Since you permit me then, (ſaid the ſtranger), I will relate, in a few words, what you have a right, Madam, to know, before I can expect you will rely on my aſſurances, of being ready to render you any ſervice you may honour me with; and yet I am ſenſible that a man is never more aukwardly circumſtanced than when he is obliged to ſpeak of himſelf, and, above all, to tell who he is. It is particularly difficult for me to do this, (added he, in a dejected tone), ſince I have not unfrequently forgotten myſelf, or, at leaſt, been in a diſpoſition of mind which made me very ſincerely try at it." ——

He pauſed, but Roſalie continuing ſilent and attentive to him, he went on—

" Perhaps, if your reſidence in England was in the weſt, you may have heard of the family of Walſingham—I am of that family..... It is not neceſſary to relate to you, Madam, the particular circumſtances of a life which has had nothing uncommon in it, unleſs it be that I loſt, at an early period, the perſon with whom

I hoped to have paſſed it in as much happineſs as mutual affection and a coincidence of diſpoſition could promiſe.—From that time, the death of my elder brother having made the purſuit of the profeſſion to which I was brought up unneceſſary, I have wandered over the world, with the hope of finding, in change of place, a temporary relief for the wounds which no time can cure; and I have ſucceeded ſo far, as to take ſome intereſt in the objects which nature, or art, preſent to the traveller, particularly in Italy: as I had before viſited almoſt every part of it, except Malta and Calabria ultra, and found that my ſpirits once more required change of place, I left England about two months ſince for Leghorn, from thence I got a paſſage to Malta, and having a curioſity to viſit that part of Calabria immediately oppoſite the coaſt of Sicily, which had been ſo lately the ſcene of one of the moſt tremendous convulſions of Nature on record, I embarked in a Malteſe galley, commanded by the Chevalier

Chevalier de Montagny, a French Knight of Malta, with whom I had been fortunate enough to make an acquaintance; and we deſigned to have extended our cruize to the Gulph of Manfredonia, but having ſeen an Algerine or Turkiſh xebec, which the Chevalier had reaſon to believe was hovering about the coaſt with piratical intentions, he determined to attempt taking it. We were in chaſe for many hours; after which, the Chevalier caſting anchor about a mile from hence, I inquired, as I uſually do, what there was worth landing to ſee?—and with ſome difficulty diſcovered, that we were near the ancient port of Formiſcuſa, where there were a few fine remnants of Roman buildings, and where I might very probably find coins, or ſmall pieces of ſculpture. My friend de Montagny, whoſe intention it was to watch the xebec, which, he believed, intended to return, aſſured me, that I might come on ſhore and ſatisfy my curioſity without any danger of his leaving me behind. I avail-

ed myſelf, therefore, of the occaſion, and had been purchaſing ſome antiquities, of little value to them, among the peaſants of the village, when, ſurveying that ſpot where there are evidently the ruins of a temple, I was ſurpriſed to obſerve a lady, whom I immediately ſaw was very unlike the inhabitants of the ſurrounding country, and who, on my nearer approach, I heard ſpeak in accents which confirmed my firſt idea of her being an Engliſhwoman..... Ah! Madam, how happy ſhall I eſteem myſelf, if, in the accidental indulgence of that curioſity, where the higheſt gratification it can afford, is but a very tranſient relief to a mind incurably hurt, I ſhould prove the means of being eſſentially uſeful to a young lady—who—I am ill at expreſſing what I feel, and know that you are, that you muſt be, ſuperior to common-place compliments: yet I cannot refrain from ſaying, that, as being of the ſame country, you have on that ſcore a right to my beſt ſervices, though, that were you of

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any other, one need only behold you to be convinced that you muſt command the moſt reſpectful homage of every man."

Roſalie, who had rather the latter part of this ſpeech had been ſpared, now heſitated, bluſhed, and attempted to ſpeak, but ſhe failed; and Walſingham, who ſaw her embarraſſment, and appeared perfectly to underſtand it, reſumed his diſcourſe.

" Unleſs I know more of your ſituation, than, on ſo ſhort an acquaintance, you may think it proper to entruſt me with, I cannot venture to adviſe; but I can, with great truth, aſſure you, that if you will venture to put yourſelf under my care, I ſhall think it the moſt fortunate circumſtance of my life, to be allowed to conduct you from hence, in whatever manner you think conſiſtent with ſafety or propriety, and to whatever place you ſhall point out. I will not leave you till you are ſecure in the protection of ſome of your friends, and I will attend

you either to any part of the continent, or to England."

Roſalie, now confirmed in her reſolution to depart, looked as if ſhe would expreſs her thanks, when Walſingham, who appeared already to have acquired the art of reading her thoughts, ſaid, "And do not, I beſeech you, Madam, imagine that, by my undertaking this, you will be under the leaſt obligation to me: far otherwiſe, believe me—for you will confer the greateſt of poſſible obligations on a man, to whom life has no longer any value, but what he can derive from being ſerviceable to others."

Roſalie now thought herſelf perfectly juſtified in accepting an offer which threatened no inconvenience to the ſtranger, while it promiſed to reſtore her to liberty, and, perhaps, to felicity. Diſmiſſing then all the objections, which ſtill attempted to obtrude themſelves on her mind, ſhe entered into a diſcuſſion of the beſt means of eſcaping from a place, where the

the few precautions, that were taken to ſecure her ſtay, aroſe merely from the ſuppoſed impracticability of her flight.

After a long converſation it was agreed, that however deſirable it might be for her to go by land, yet ſhe would incur great riſk of being purſued, and in ſuch roads muſt inevitably be overtaken.——Nothing therefore remained but for her to accept what Mr. Walſingham very earneſtly offered, in the name of his friend the Chevalier de Montagny, a conveyance in the Malteſe galley to any port from whence it was poſſible a paſſage to England could be the moſt quickly obtained; Walſingham aſſuring her that the veſſel and its commander would be entirely at her orders.

This point being ſettled, it was next to be conſidered how and when ſhe could leave her priſon with the leaſt probability of detection. This was not difficult; but aware, from paſt experience, of the many inconveniences which muſt be encountered at ſea, it was neceſſary that what baggage ſhe had ſhould go with her,

ſhe

ſhe reminded Walſingham that ſhe could not convey this herſelf, nor could ſhe even carry it from her room to the lower part of the houſe, without hazarding a diſcovery. After a moment's conſideration he obviated this objection, by telling her, that as, from her deſcription, the caſtle was very large, and that there were only two ſervants and a peaſant who ſlept there, nothing was more eaſy than to introduce a ſailor, or more, if more were requiſite, who would probably be able to paſs through the houſe unnoticed, and convey away whatever ſhe wiſhed to have with her. He added, "and I will come with them myſelf to prevent all accidents from raſhneſs or blunders. There is a moon, about two o'clock, which will afford us light enough; it is an hour when your keepers will be aſleep, and there can be no difficulty in your then leaving a houſe ſo ſlightly guarded."

Roſalie now recollected that there was a very material one—that of the doors being always ſhut of a night with great circumſpection,

circumſpection, at leaſt ſo ſhe imagined, becauſe ſhe had frequently heard Cattina, after ſhe had left her of a night, go round all that part of the building adjoining the great ſtaircaſe, up which the diſtant noiſe of ſhutting and barring the maſſive doors ſounded in ſullen echoes. She had often liſtened, after all had been ſtill, for ſome moments, and believed that ſhe heard the ſame precautions taken in the more remote parts of the edifice; parts, indeed, where ſhe had never been.

When ſhe communicated this to Mr. Walſingham, he became impatient.—" If the doors are not eaſily opened, (cried he), we will cut them down; nay, rather batter them with three or four eight pounders, from our galley, than fail."—Roſalie turned pale at the very mention of any expedient of this kind.—Ah, no! (ſaid ſhe); if my eſcape cannot be effected without the hazard of ſhedding blood, I muſt reſign myſelf to my deplorable deſtiny—for I had rather periſh here than be the cauſe of one man's death.

Ah!

Ah! Sir, you do not conſider, that, by the leaſt alarm given from the caſtle, the village below, as well as another higher up the country, would, in an inſtant, ſend forth their inhabitants; beſide there are arms kept in a lower room, which Cattina once ſhewed me, and a ſubterraneous communication with the cannon you ſee without."——Walſingham ſmiled at the formidable phalanx her fancy had thus embodied, well aſſured that a very few reſolute men would put to flight not only the inhabitants of the caſtle, but all the peaſantry around it who could be collected, and who could have little temptation to riſk their lives in defending the manſion of a woman, whom they had, perhaps, never ſeen, and to whom they ſeemed to be very little obliged. Roſalie, however, after pauſing a moment, ſaid ſhe recollected, that, on the day when Cattina undertook to ſhew her where ſhe might, perhaps, find ſome books, ſhe had led her along a paſſage adjoining to her bedchamber, and from thence down ſe-

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veral flights of narrow ſtairs to the bottom of the building, whence ſome places, that appeared like arched vaults, led into the room where the papers were depoſited, and from thence there was a door opening into the foſſé next the garden. She had particularly remarked this door, becauſe Cattina had opened it to give more light to the apartment, which was extremely obſcure, from part of it being under ground.—" Cattina (continued ſhe) left me there alone for a conſiderable time, and when I came out of the room, the door ſtill remained open; it is therefore probable, that there are no faſtenings to it, and that I might go from thence, as well as have my clothes conveyed thither, without alarming Cattina and the other ſervants, who inhabit quite another part of the houſe."——Walſingham eagerly ſeized on this idea, but ſtarted a difficulty that had not occurred to Roſalie.—" How (ſaid he) ſhall we, who are ſtrangers to the caſtle, find this door, unleſs we are firſt ſhewn it?"—Roſalie had nothing to

propoſe,

propoſe.—"Unleſs, (added her new friend, after a little recollection), unleſs I could, before it is dark, go round the caſtle, when I think I could eaſily diſcover the place; there we would wait for you, or, if we found the door open, make our way up, at the hour appointed, to your apartment."

To this ſcheme, though ſhe had nothing better to offer, Roſalie objected, becauſe ſhe dreaded, leſt the ſight of a ſtranger ſhould raiſe ſuſpicions in the ſervants; and ſhe knew that Cattina, whoſe head was filled with ideas of pirates, ſince the appearance of one of their xebecs on the coaſt, was become more than uſually vigilant in watching, at the windows, if theſe objects of her terror again appeared.

"What is to be done then, deareſt Madam? (cried Walſingham); we have no time to loſe, and it is abſolutely neceſſary that we determine on ſomething.—Can you not, from ſome place where there is no danger of our being remarked, point out the ſide of the building where this door

door opens into the foſſé?"——This appeared the leaſt perilous plan, but it was alſo the moſt uncertain. Roſalie then led the way, along the ſkirts of the wood, to a riſing ground, affording a view of the whole building, and bade Mr. Walſingham remark three tall cypreſſes near its weſtern extremity.——"If you paſs them, (ſaid ſhe), and walk ſtraight on, you will come to what was once a deep foſſé immediately ſurrounding the caſtle; but now it is in many places nearly filled up, and the earth and wall are fallen in, inſomuch that, when I looked out for a moment at the door in queſtion, rather for air than from any curioſity, I perceived I could have got up into the garden by this way."——Walſingham fixed his eyes ſteadily on the place, aſſured Roſalie he ſhould not fail to find it; then again repeated, that he would be punctually at the place, with his own ſervant and a ſailor, at two o'clock in the morning, an hour when he knew the moon would afford light to facilitate their getting

getting on board the veſſel, which would immediately ſail. He inquired, if Roſalie had a watch; ſhe had loſt hers in leaving Sicily; and, therefore, that no miſtake might happen as to the hour, he deſired ſhe would make uſe of one of his, which he ſet by the other.

It now became time to part, for the evening was cloſing in. Walſingham, after a renewal of every proteſtation which was likely to encourage the timid adventurer, whoſe fears and agitation he ſaw painted in her countenance, took a haſty leave, was preſently loſt among the trees, while Roſalie ſlowly returned to her gloomy priſon, dreading leſt any accident ſhould prevent her leaving it; yet trembling at the hazard ſhe muſt incur, and the difficulties ſhe muſt encounter, to regain her liberty.

CHAP. XXVII.

AFTER having given the uſual attention to her little boy, Roſalie was at liberty to make the few arrangements that were neceſſary, and to reflect on the ſtep ſhe was about to take. However earneſtly ſhe had wiſhed for ſuch an opportunity as was offered her, ſhe trembled now that the moment approached; yet all ſhe had heard from Mr. Walſingham, and his zeal, which did not ſeem leſſened by the knowledge of her being married, ought to give her ſtrength of mind and courage. But the uncertainty of the time of when ſhe ſhould reach England; the comfortleſs circumſtance of her being ſo long on board a veſſel, which might be encountered by pirates, where ſhe would be the only woman; the

the ſickneſs and difficulties of ſuch a voyage with a little infant; and the doubts how far her huſband might approve of her thus putting herſelf wholly in the power of a ſtranger, were conſiderations, which, though they did not ſhake her reſolution, gave dreadful agitation to her ſpirits as ſhe was about to execute it.

Other fears too aſſailed her.—The door in the foſſé might not be open; ſhe was far from being ſure ſhe could find her way to it; and ſhe ſhuddered at the thoughts of deſcending theſe long and intricate ſtair-caſes, and traverſing the vault-like paſ-ſages leading to the room which ſhe was not certain ſhe ſhould find. Cattina had told her a ſtory of a former lord of the caſtle, ſhe knew not his name, who, being jealous of his wife, had invited the Sig-neur, whom he ſuſpected of being in her favour, to an entertainment, when he had killed him, and buried him in ſome of theſe rooms, and that lights had often been ſeen from the loops and windows, and ſtrange noiſes heard in this end of the caſtle,

caſtle, and that nobody had lived in the lower apartments ſince that time. This was a ſtory which had the leſs affected Roſalie when ſhe heard it, becauſe it was ſo common in all old houſes in England to have ſuch a legend. Holmwood had the ghoſt of a lady, in a ruff and farthingale, which always walked on Friday nights; and ſhe was not at all ſurpriſed, that the old caſtle of Formiſcuſa was furniſhed with the ſpirit of a murdered knight: but now, that it was neceſſary for her to wander alone over the deſerted caverns, which were the ſuppoſed ſcenes of ſuch a tragic adventure, the ſame fears and feelings returned as had oppreſſed her mind on the firſt two or three days after her arrival in this deſolate manſion.

While theſe thoughts paſſed in ſucceſſion through her mind, the hour arrived for Cattina to bring her evening meal. Cattina came as uſual, but was not in one of her beſt humours; ſhe was ſullen and gloomy, and, inſtead of ſuch converſation as ſhe ſometimes held, ſhe ſeemed diſpoſed

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to mutter complaints, though in indirect and general terms. Roſalie, afraid of her ſtaying, and too conſcious of what was paſſing in her own mind, was not able to command reſolution enough to ſooth and flatter her into better temper, which ſhe had not unfrequently done. Cattina, however, having fidgetted about the room a little in her odd way when her temper was diſcompoſed, ſat down, and a ſilence enſued, when Roſalie heard the watch in her pocket, and was ſtruck with the fear that Cattina would hear it too, and knowing ſhe had not one before, would inquire how ſhe came by it; at this idea ſhe felt the blood forſake her cheeks, and was ſo much diſcompoſed, that, to a more accurate obſerver than Cattina, ſhe would undoubtedly have betrayed herſelf.

Cattina, however, who had ſome grievances of her own, was fortunately leſs quick-ſighted and intelligent than many who might have been choſen for the office of keeper, and after perplexing Roſalie by a longer ſtay than uſual, while ſhe talked and

and made as much noiſe as ſhe could; the female warder of the caſtle departed, and, as ſhe marched ſlowly through the adjoining rooms, Roſalie fervently prayed that ſhe might never hear thoſe ſounds again.

She now debated with herſelf, whether it would be better to go down firſt and examine the door, or wait till the hour when ſhe expected Mr. Walſingham to arrive at it, and, after ſome deliberation, ſhe determined on the former plan, reflecting, that if they came, and found it faſtened, the raſhneſs of Mr. Walſingham, who ſeemed to deſpiſe every danger that could ariſe from within the caſtle, might either impede her flight, or ſtain it with ſome deed of violence.

It was neceſſary, however, to ſtay till ſhe was ſure that Cattina, and the two ſervants who belonged to the caſtle, were retired for the night; and indeed ſhe dreaded the expedition too much to anticipate its execution. She endeavoured, by every argument ſhe could draw from

reaſon and religion, to fortify herſelf againſt the fears that aſſailed her, and, for a moment, thought ſhe had conquered them. The appearance of ſuch a man as Mr. Walſingham, at ſuch a place as Formiſcuſa, ſeemed little leſs than a miracle, and ſhe endeavoured to perſuade her mind it was the particular interpoſition of Heaven in her favour; and that to neglect ſuch an occaſion of delivering herſelf from perpetual confinement, would be ingratitude to the Almighty, as well as contrary to the duty ſhe owed her huſband, her child, and herſelf. Innocent as ſhe was of all offence towards God or Man, what had ſhe to fear?

Fortifying her mind with theſe reflections, and endeavouring to look beyond preſent inconveniences, ſhe thought upon the time when ſhe ſhould be reſtored to Montalbert, and ſhould remember all that now perplexed and oppreſſed her only as a fearful dream.

Liſtening attentively to the well-known ſounds of ſhutting the doors, in the inhabited

habited part of the building, ſhe heard them cloſed for the night in the uſual manner; ſhe then went to the window to ſee what was the weather—there was more wind than common, and ſhe ſaw the old cypreſſes wave in the blaſt. From the ſea, on the other ſide, the moon that was to light her on her perilous way was juſt emerging. She addreſſed herſelf to Heaven, and implored its protection; and, conſcious of the rectitude of her intentions, believed that ſhe ſhould go through the evening's taſk with reſolution.

Her own and her child's clothes were collected in the trunks. She had dreſſed him ready for the journey before ſhe put him to bed, and he ſlept undiſturbed by the anxieties that agitated his mother's breaſt, who, having determined not to attempt to ſleep, looked continually at the watch, and thought that time moved more than uſually ſlow. It was, however, near midnight, and, once more collecting all her reſolution, ſhe determined on examining the door by which ſhe hoped to

eſcape. She opened, not without difficulty, that of her chamber, which led to the avenues of this lower room, and ſuch was the violence of the wind that ruſhed along the paſſages, that had ſhe had a candle in her hand it muſt have been extinguiſhed; ſhe trembled, and, retreating, ſhut the door haſtily. Warned by this circumſtance, ſhe now conſidered what would be her ſituation ſhould the light be extinguiſhed while ſhe was deſcending, and ſhould ſhe loſe her way among the many winding paſſages which ſhe remembered having ſeen when ſhe followed Cattina. The apprehenſion was fearful, and again her reſolution to go down the ſtairs failed her.

She returned to her child, whom ſhe hoped would ſleep till her return, kiſſed him, and, imploring for him the protection of Heaven, tried to regain her courage; but as the dread of being left in utter darkneſs, which the riſing wind gave her great reaſon to fear, was ſtill the predominant idea, ſhe endeavoured to take ſuch

ſuch precautions as occurred to her againſt it, and ſurrounded the candle, ſhe was to carry, with a ſkreen of paper, lighting at the ſame time the lamp that hung in the room: then looking at the watch, and finding it paſt midnight, ſhe once more ſummoned all her reſolution, and ſoftly opening the door that the force of the guſt might be leſs ſuddenly felt, ſhe advanced along the paſſage that went from her room to the place where another branched from it, leading to the narrow winding ſtairs. She looked fearfully along theſe black and apparent endleſs avenues; the half-obſcured light, lent by her ſhaded candle, ſerved, indeed, to make "*darkneſs viſible.*" She feared to look long on the dreary vacuity, leſt her imagination ſhould embody forms of its own creation; ſhe reached the ſtaircaſe, and a ſtronger blaſt of wind, gathering here as in a funnel, threatened to extinguiſh her light, which ſhe even held with difficulty. She found herſelf, however, on the next floor, in a ſort of landing place, from whence other

paſſages led off ſhe knew not whither, and ſhe ſtopped a moment to regain her breath, of which fear had nearly deprived her.

In this pauſe, however prone her fancy was to imaginary ſounds as well as ſights of horror, ſhe heard nothing but the loud guſts of wind that collected beneath from various openings in the walls, and being confined among narrow-vaulted paſſages, groaned in loud guſts, then ſunk into ſullen murmurs. Still Roſalie knew it was but the wind, the ſame wind that would probably in a few hours lend its friendly aſſiſtance to waft her to the place from whence ſhe might procure a paſſage to England. This thought animated her courage; ſhe raiſed her eyes, and aſſured herſelf that ſhe ſaw nothing which could give her the leaſt alarm; bare and broken walls, and dark avenues, which ſhe had no buſineſs to explore, ſurrounded her: ſhe determined then to purſue her way ſlowly and cautiouſly, for the ſteps of the ſecond flight of ſtairs were broken and decayed;

decayed; ſhe advanced, when ſhe was ſuddenly ſtopped by a ſound, which ſhe thought was that of human voices ſpeaking low—ſhe liſtened with a beating heart. A guſt of wind, more violent than ſhe had yet heard, impeded for a moment her diſtinguiſhing any other noiſe; but, as it died away, ſhe was convinced ſhe heard talking, and that there were two or more voices.—What ſhould this mean?—With a trembling hand ſhe once more took the watch, Walſingham had given her, from her pocket. It was not yet half an hour after twelve, and the appointment was not till two. This noiſe then could not be occaſioned by Walſingham and his people waiting for admittance.—What then ſhould it be?—but that their project was by ſome accident diſcovered, and that the agents of Signora Belcaſtro were waiting to entrap thoſe on whom ſhe depended for her deliverance, and that they would afterwards puniſh her for attempting to eſcape; probably by tearing her child

from her, and confining her to ſome dungeon beneath the caſtle. Theſe terrific ideas deprived her, for a moment, of the power of moving from the place where ſhe ſtood; but ſhe had gained recollection enough to reſolve on returning up ſtairs, and ſhutting her door, before theſe her cruel purſuers ſhould arrive at it, when a loud and violent cruſh confirmed all her fears; ſhe turned, and, as haſtily as her trembling limbs would carry her, ſhe aſcended the ſtairs, treading lightly. Almoſt immediately ſhe heard the footſteps of ſome perſon following her. Her reſolution would now have failed entirely, if the greater fear had not conquered the leſs; for ſhe imagined, that while ſhe was thus abſent, her little infant, whom ſhe had left ſleeping in its bed, might be carried away; and that idea was ſo much more dreadful than any thing that could befal herſelf only, that ſhe ſprang forward with unuſual ſwiftneſs—her candle was extinguiſhed, and ſhe had no light to guide

guide her, yet continued to make her way, where, at another time, ſhe would have found it difficult even by day.—The ſteps behind were heard more near, and ſhe thought the man that followed was but a very little way from her when ſhe reached the top of the ſtairs; the door of her room, which ſhe had left open, was ſo ſtill, and the lamp that remained burning afforded her light to guide her to it. She ran forward to the bed; her boy was calmly ſleeping as ſhe had left him; ſhe threw her arms round him, and ſunk, quite exhauſted with fear, by his ſide—ſtill ſenſible, but in terror too great to be ſupported.

The man who had ſo alarmed her, guided by the ſame light, followed her into the room, and approached her. Determined to die, rather than part with her child, ſhe ſhrieked faintly, and implored inarticulately his mercy..... But it was Walſingham himſelf that ſpoke to her, conjuring her, in the ſtrongeſt, yet moſt

reſpectful terms, to recollect herſelf, proteſting that ſhe had nothing to fear, unleſs from delay; ſince, from the noiſe he had been obliged to make, it was poſſible the people in the caſtle might be alarmed. He briefly accounted for coming ſo much before his time, by telling her, that the wind riſing, the Chevalier de Montagny was afraid that the leaſt increaſe might compel him to put out to ſea; in which caſe ſhe would have loſt the chance of eſcaping, as he could not have returned while it blew from the ſame quarter, which it ſometimes did for many weeks; and that they had, therefore, agreed that it would be better for them to force the door, in which they had found no difficulty, and rather to hazard alarming her for a moment, than not enſure her future ſafety.

Roſalie, reſtored to herſelf by this reaſonable account, now exerted herſelf to fly for ever from this place of dread, under the guidance of her generous protector,

tector, who told her two men were below that only waited his ſignal to fetch her baggage. This he immediately gave; and Roſalie, having only to wrap her little boy in the ſame coverings as had ſerved them before, during their long journey, was inſtantly ready with him in her arms.

Walſingham conducted her carefully down with her ſleeping charge, the two men following with the trunks. Some little difficulty occurred in her mounting the broken foſſé on the other ſide; but ſhe was light, and naturally alert, and though ſhe ſtill trembled from her late terror, the certainty of being releaſed from her cruel confinement, of which there now ſeemed no doubt, lent her ſtrength, with the aſſiſtance of Walſingham's ſervant, (for ſhe would truſt her child only to Walſingham himſelf), to conquer this impediment. Her deliverer then followed, and reſtored his charge to her, and offering her his arm, which ſhe readily accepted, they haſtened as much

as her ſtrength would admit, and, after about an hour's walking, found themſelves on the ſhore, where the boat waited that was to carry them on board the Malteſe galley.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

THOUGH, on account of the tide, the embarkation was troubleſome, and though the ſurge ran high, as the boat made its way to the ſhip, yet Roſalie, who now no longer doubted of her eſcape, was unconſcious of inconveniences, which, at another time, would have alarmed her. The moment they were ſafely on board the Malteſe veſſel, Walſingham expreſſed his ſatisfaction in a manner that gave Roſalie the moſt favourable impreſſions of the goodneſs of his heart, and the ſincerity of his profeſſions; while the Chevalier de Montagny welcomed her with all the politeneſs and urbanity, for which military men of a certain age, and of his nation, were once ſo juſtly eſteemed. He entreated her to conſider herſelf as miſtreſs

miſtreſs of the ſhip, and aſſured her, that whatever merit there might be in the original purpoſe of his voyage, there was infinitely more in being inſtrumental to the deliverance of ſo fair a captive from impriſonment; and in anſwer to the mingled thanks and apologies which ſhe attempted to utter, he ſaid that he only did his duty when he lent what aſſiſtance he could to his Engliſh friend, for that he was bound, by his military and religious oath, to ſuccour the injured and diſtreſſed in every part of the world. The Chevalier then led her into a ſmall ſtate cabin, extremely commodious for the ſize of the ſhip, and aſſured her it was hers till ſhe was landed wherever Mr. Walſingham ſhould direct, and about which they were then going to conſult; that he would only direct ſome refreſhment to be brought to her, and then leave her to repoſe.

Roſalie, who, by the quick ſucceſſion of fear and hope, had hardly had time to recollect her ſcattered ſenſes during the laſt few hours, now looked round her, and

and ſaw herſelf in comparative ſecurity. Delivered from the power of the unrelenting Signora Belcaſtro, in the protection, as ſhe believed, of men of honour, and in a way of returning to her country, where ſhe aſſured herſelf ſhe ſhould meet her huſband, ſhe now offered up her acknowledgments to that Power who had miraculouſly interpoſed to ſave her; her full heart, relieved by prayer and tears, beat leſs tumultuouſly, and, notwithſtanding the rolling of the ſhip, for the wind ſtill continued high, ſhe ſuffered leſs than ſhe had ever done at ſea before; and even ſlept many hours, awaking much refreſhed in the morning, and able to go upon deck, where, as the ſea was now calm, the ſails only gently ſwelled with a ſummer breeze.

Mr. Walſingham and the Chevalier de Montagny both attended her, and ſhe very ſoon learned to conſider the one as a father, the other as a brother; for the former was near fifty years of age. Walſingham no longer made thoſe ſpeeches expreſſive

expreſſive of admiration which had given her ſome pain on their firſt meeting; he ſeemed no more to conſider her as a beautiful young woman, to whom ſuch compliments might be acceptable, but as a wife, whom he was reſtoring to her huſband; as a mother, whom he had preſerved for her child. Since he knew ſhe was married, ſhe was to him but as a ſiſter; and, indeed, he now repeated, that all his affections were buried with the amiable Leonora he had loſt, and whoſe death he yet deplored in terms ſo pathetic, that, as ſhe liſtened to him, the ſoft eyes of Roſalie were frequently filled with tears.

The ſecond day after they were on board, and as ſoon as Roſalie ſeemed quite recovered from the fright and fatigue that ſhe had ſuffered the night ſhe quitted Formiſcuſa, Walſingham took occaſion to tell her, that he had conſulted with the Chevalier de Montagny, who ſubmitted to him at what port in the Mediterranean they would be landed; and that he had ſettled it ſhould be

be at Marſeilles, whither they were now making their way with a favourable wind. To this Roſalie had nothing to object. Wherever there ſeemed the greateſt certainty of an immediate paſſage to England appeared to her the moſt eligible; and ſhe heard with pleaſure, ſuch as ſhe had long been a ſtranger to, that, if the wind continued as favourable as it now ſeemed to promiſe, they ſhould be at Marſeilles in two or three days.

In the mean time, though the dread of having been too ſanguine as to the fate of Montalbert, ſometimes obtruded itſelf upon her mind, ſhe endeavoured to appeaſe theſe fears; and when ſhe had once found courage to relate to her two new friends the circumſtances under which they had been ſeparated, ſhe received conſolation in hearing their opinions that Montalbert was ſafe; and when doubts and apprehenſions, as to where he might be, tormented her, Walſingham bade her recollect how eaſily ſhe might from Marſeilles make inquiry at Naples, and, if he

was

was in Italy, inform him of her health and reſidence. What was to become of her till all this could be done made now no part of her uneaſineſs; for ſhe hoped and believed the dear mother ſhe had left in England was ready, if not to acknowledge her as her daughter, to receive her as her niece, for her marriage with Montalbert could no longer be a ſecret. To Charles Vyvian alſo, and to William Leſſington, ſhe thought it might now be told; and to the former ſhe believed the knowledge of it would render her as dear as if their nearer relationſhip was known.

While theſe hopes ſoothed the ſolitary hours of Roſalie, her converſations with Walſingham impreſſed her every moment with greater reſpect for his character, and pity for the dejection he frequently ſeemed to feel. He ſeldom ſpoke of himſelf; but ſhe found, from his general converſation, that, in the poſſeſſion of an affluent fortune, he had no other ſatisfaction than as it afforded him the means of beſtowing individual benefits on his friends,

friends, or aſſiſting, with general benevolence, the unfortunate of every deſcription. While he was thus engaged, the heavy preſſure, which early diſappointment had laid on his heart, ſeemed to be lightened. When neither of theſe objects happened to be immediately within his reach, his ſpirits were extremely unequal; ſometimes he was apparently careleſs and gay, talked of the purſuits which uſually occupy men of his age with indifference; threw ſome degree of ridicule on the importance ſo frequently affixed to them; and declared himſelf a philoſopher, a citizen of the world, who never meant to fix himſelf to any country, or any plan of life; and Roſalie obſerved with concern, that, after theſe efforts, of what ſhe could not but conſider as forced and artificial ſpirits, he ſometimes ſunk into the deepeſt dejection; when ſilent, abſent, and with a countenance where melancholy and regret were ſtrongly expreſſed, he appeared rather to ſuffer life than to enjoy it. He had general and brilliant talents, a mind highly

highly cultivated, and a taſte elegant and correct. There was no ſcience to which he was a ſtranger, and every European language was familiar to him. Young as he was, he had ſeen a great deal of the world; and he had not merely ſeen it as it appears to a man of fortune, for his devolved to him by the death of an uncle and an elder brother; but was perfectly qualified to judge of the different receptions given by that world to a young man who has his way to make in it, or one who poſſeſſes a large independent fortune. This knowledge had matured his judgment, without narrowing his heart. The variety of countries he had viſited, and the characters he had ſtudied, rendered his converſation extremely entertaining; for, when his ſpirits were really good, it was enlivened by flaſhes of wit, or by anecdotes well told. In his moſt melancholy hours he would ſeek the company of Roſalie, and engage her inſenſibly in converſation, which naturally turned on Montalbert.

Of

Of an evening, as they ſat on the deck together, this ſort of diſcourſe ſometimes continued till Roſalie melted into tears, and till, her fears awakened and encouraged by thus recounting them, ſhe deplored Montalbert as if certain of his death, while Walſingham, inſtead of attempting, as he had often done, to diſſipate her apprehenſions, wept too. The tears ſlowly ſtealing down his cheeks, till ſuddenly ſtarting, he would ſeem to recollect the weakneſs, and indeed cruelty, towards Roſalie, of indulging and encouraging ſuch emotions, and haſtily bidding her good night, would hurry to the cabin of De Montagny.

This reſpectable man, who had conceived a ſincere affection for his Engliſh friend, had, when Roſalie was firſt mentioned to him, imagined, that Walſingham had met with ſome fair adventurer, and was, according to the uſual morality of his country, extremely willing to aſſiſt him in taking advantage of ſuch a meeting; but when he ſaw Roſalie, and had converſed

verſed with her, he was convinced that he had formed a wrong opinion, and began to be apprehenſive leſt ſuch an acquaintance ſhould have ſerious conſequences for his friend. When he did not make a third in their converſations, he judged of what had paſſed by the manner of Walſingham after them. The third or fourth day of their voyage, which, for want of wind, was lengthened beyond what he had expected, he took occaſion to aſk Walſingham, very ſeriouſly, what he meant to do with his fair countrywoman?

"What I mean to do with her? (replied Walſingham).....Nay but, my dear Sir, what a queſtion is that?—To reſtore her certainly to her friends in England—to this happy Montalbert, if he be living!"

"If you do ſo, my friend, (ſaid De Montagny), let your name be enrolled by the ſide of Scipio's, for aſſuredly your merit will be as great."

"Not at all!—Scipio was enchanted by the beauty of his captive, or there would have

have been no merit in reſtoring her to her lover. Now I am not enchanted with the beauty of Mrs. Montalbert, ſuperior as I acknowledge it to be to that of moſt women I have ſeen; therefore I ſhall have no merit in acting by her, as I ought, indeed, to act, even if I *were* enamoured of her. But you know, Chevalier, that to me the moſt lovely women are become mere objects of admiration, like the pictures and ſtatues of Italy."

"Indeed I do not know, nor can I believe any ſuch thing, my friend.—For example, I know not how to imagine, that, if this lady had been an antiquity, ſuch as you profeſſed to ſearch for among the ruins of Formiſcuſa, that you would have ſtormed the caſtle for her relief."

"It would not have been neceſſary; but in fact it is begging the queſtion, for had not the lady been young and handſome, ſhe would never have been impriſoned there. However, Chevalier, I truſt that any woman in diſtreſs would have commanded my ſervices, as I am ſure ſhe would

would yours, merely becauſe ſhe was a diſtreſſed woman."

"*My* ſervices are dedicated, you know, to the diſtreſſed of every deſcription; but to damſels in trouble I can be conſidered of little more importance than their confeſſors when once my ſervice is ended, for I am but a kind of military monk: but you, my good friend, at the age of three or four and twenty, are, perhaps, a protector for a very young and very pretty woman, who might be leſs exceptionable in Italy, than among Meſſieurs les Anglais."

"You do not ſuppoſe then (ſaid Walſingham) that Montalbert can be ſuch a fool, or ſuch a brute, as to be diſpleaſed that his wife has put herſelf under my protection to eſcape from the tyranny of his mother?"

"Oh, no!—(replied De Montagny); I ſuppoſe nothing..... I only fear, that being continually with ſuch a woman as Madame de Montalbert; hearing from thoſe beautiful lips, profeſſions of gratitude,

tude, and gazing on thoſe charming eyes, filled with tears of tenderneſs, it may prove, at laſt, a very ſevere trial to my friend's fortitude, when the hour ſhall come in which he muſt give her back to this happy Montalbert."

"Would to Heaven that were to happen to-morrow, (anſwered Walſingham, claſping his hands, and ſpeaking with warmth)—would to Heaven it might be to-morrow that I could ſee her happy!"

"I wiſh it were, (ſaid De Montagny drily); but if, when the time is paſt, you can inform me that you really felt, as you now believe you ſhall *then* feel, I may then proclaim my friend the moſt extraordinary man of his age in the three kingdoms of his maſter."

"I verily believe I ſhall claim your eulogium, De Montagny, and I here promiſe honeſtly to relate to you what paſſes in my heart at that time..... Ah! (added he, with a deep-drawn ſigh), you have no conception, my dear Chevalier, of the hold that ſuch an attachment, as mine, to

a lovely woman, who is now no more, has on the heart—I ſay, *you* can have no idea of it, becauſe, deſigned from your early youth for the Order of Malta, you never allowed yourſelf to form ſuch attachments as were at all ſerious; but *I* feel it to be impoſſible ever to love another, and all my hopes of felicity are buried in the grave of my Leonora."

"All that is very well. I am ſure you now think what you ſay; but—we have read, and even ſeen, certain events, that diſpoſe me to believe much in the influence of time and deſpair, as remedies for theſe violent paſſions..... In ſhort---------"

"In ſhort! (interrupted Walſingham); you don't believe the paſſion can exiſt when the object is no more?"

"I believe it is *transferable*, my friend, if not curable: I have ſeen—oh! I know not how many inſtances of it..... You have read perhaps, or, perhaps, you have ſeen a little after-piece, on the French ſtage, called Le Veuf?"

"Oh!

" Oh! (exclaimed Walſingham impatiently), if we were to give up every ſentiment as ridiculous, that your writers, or your dramatiſts, attempt to render ſo, there would not be left, in the human heart, one virtue to reconcile us to the miſery of exiſtence."

De Montagny, who meant not to hurt his friend, ſeeing that he took the matter more ſeriouſly than was intended, let the converſation drop, and Walſingham, whoſe ſpirits were much agitated, went upon deck, where the ſtars reflected in the clear expanſe of a ſea ſo perfectly calm, that the veſſel did not perceptibly move; the ſtillneſs of the night, ſcarcely diſturbed by the ſlow rippling of the waves parted by its prow, and the mildneſs of the air, reſtored him to a more tranquil ſtate. He bade the ſteerſman and a boy, who was on the firſt watch, begin the evening hymn ſung by the Malteſe ſailors. He ſat down on the gunwale, and bore a part; the tumult of his ſpirits entirely ſubſided,

and he began to wonder how they had been ſo diſturbed!—" But it provokes me, (ſaid he, as he reflected on the matter)—it provokes me, that a man of ſuch good ſenſe, and ſo excellent a heart, ſhould adopt prejudices ſo entirely the reſult of the manners of his country, and his own particular mode of education.... How *can* he, with ſentiments ſo generally honourable, believe that I could ſuffer myſelf to feel, for this charming woman, any other degree of tenderneſs than might be inſpired by an amiable ſiſter?—No!—to ſuppoſe me capable of other views, is to deſtroy the pleaſure I take in protecting and ſerving her; and why would he rob me of the only happineſs I am now capable of taſting?—In love with Mrs. Montalbert, or in danger of becoming ſo!—Good God! how can he think ſo?—When I ſee her, I am calm and contented; when my heart throbs with recollected anguiſh, I hear her voice, and forget that I am miſerable. She ſpeaks of her

her huſband, and I weep with her; ſhe careſſes her child, and I weep ſtill more! If I loved her, the name of this huſband would be hateful to me, and I ſhould be jealous even of her maternal affection. .... Alas! I know I have ſeverely learnt what love is, and I am ſure the ſenſations I now feel have nothing to do with it."

As if, however, Walſingham, convinced of this himſelf, was conſcious of the propriety there was in Roſalie's knowing it too, he now took every occaſion when they were alone, and ſtill more particularly when the Chevalier de Montagny was with them, to ſpeak in ſtronger terms than ever of his widowed affections; and that he conſidered himſelf as wedded to the memory of his adored Leonora.—Roſalie ſeemed to hear him with mingled emotions of compaſſion and regard; ſhe pitied the anguiſh he felt, and reſpected the conſtancy of his affection. He repeated one of the tendereſt ſonnets of Petrarch, and then an imitation of it, which he had written; and Roſalie, not-

withſtanding the advantage the Italian language gives to this ſpecies of compoſition, preferred Walſingham's imitation. De Montagny, an unprejudiced ſpectator of theſe ſcenes, ſaw that Roſalie's heart was at preſent ſecure; but he every day fancied he had more reaſon to tremble for that of his friend.

At length, after being twice the time they had calculated on their paſſage, they landed at Marſeilles. Walſingham ſecured a lodging for Roſalie in the moſt retired part of the town, where he hired a female ſervant to attend her, and he went himſelf to an hotel. Her heart thanked him for this delicacy; nor was ſhe leſs ſenſible of the kindneſs of the Chevalier de Montagny, who, purely from motives of friendſhip to Walſingham, and of compaſſion to her, had taken a voyage of ſome length, and attended to her the whole time with as much good-nature and humanity as if he had been her neareſt relation. It was, therefore, with infinite regret that ſhe bade him farewel, when, three days after her arrival

rival at Marſeilles, he waited on her, with Walſingham, and told her his ſhip was then taking up its anchors, and that, in the evening, he ſhould go on board, and get under weigh for Malta.

CHAP. XXIX.

THE port of Marſeilles was crowded with Engliſh veſſels, for, after a war, trade ſuddenly revives. Walſingham, therefore, had his choice of conveyances by ſea; but he doubted whether he ought not to propoſe to Roſalie making the journey by land to Calais. Long accuſtomed to travel, the method of going from place to place was indifferent to him, and his choice was uſually determined by the opportunities offered of ſeeing ſome object worth notice that had not before fallen within his obſervation. As he had paſſed three times from the ſouth of France to England, and every time by a different route, he had no curioſity to gratify, even if his attention to Roſalie had allowed him,

in

in the preſent inſtance, to think of any other object in his way.

When, therefore, he bade adieu to his friend De Montagny, which lowered and depreſſed his ſpirits extremely, he walked to the lodgings of Roſalie, who had all day expected him, for De Montagny had taken leave of her the day before, and ſhe imagined him gone. New alarms had poſſeſſed her, on the reaſonableneſs of which ſhe wiſhed to have conſulted Walſingham, but it was evening before he came, and then with ſo dejected an air, and a countenance ſo melancholy, that Roſalie fancied ſome new diſaſter, ſhe knew not what, had overtaken them, and was afraid to aſk. Walſingham, however, told her, that, believing it to be her wiſh to reach England as expeditiouſly as poſſible, he was come to hear her commands on that ſubject; the whole purpoſe of his preſent viſit being to know how and when ſhe would depart.

" Alas! Sir, (replied ſhe, hurt, yet hardly conſcious that ſhe was ſo, at ſome-

thing in his manner which appeared unuſual)——Alas! Sir—I know ſo little of travelling, or of the advantages or diſadvantages of different roads, or different conveyances, that I muſt refer myſelf entirely to you. I only know, that the method which would be the leaſt troubleſome to you, would, on that account, be the moſt agreeable to me--------." Her voice faltered. " Yet there is one apprehenſion (added ſhe) that I have to-day been taught to entertain, which has extremely alarmed me. I am told that the ſmall-pox, of a malignant ſort, is at Marſeilles—if my child-----."

Walſingham immediately comprehended what ſhe would ſay. " I intended (ſaid he) to have mentioned to you, what, I find, ſome perſon has anticipated; it will undoubtedly be a reaſon for you to haſten from hence. I have, I believe, often told you, dear Madam, (added he, lowering and ſoftening his voice), that I have no uſe for the fortune I poſſeſs, but that of aſſiſting my friends..... Alone upon this earth,

earth, with no very near relations, nor any diſtant ones who want my aſſiſtance, there are no claims on my property, to me a great part of it is uſeleſs—your would give it value by uſing it. After ſuch a declaration you will not ſuppoſe that the difference of expence, between a journey by ſea or land, ought to be a conſideration. There would even be an indelicacy in my naming the ſubject, had you not once or twice talked of expence. There is then only to conſider, whether you prefer going by ſea to England, or travelling acroſs France to Calais, or any other ports; conſult your own eaſe and ſafety, and that of your dear little boy."

Roſalie, ſtill unable to decide, and ſtill more unable to expreſs what ſhe felt of obligation to him, was ſilent for ſome moments, and then referred herſelf again to him. At length, having weighed the fatigue of a very long journey by land, againſt the poſſible delays by ſea, for there was hardly any *danger* to be named at ſuch a ſeaſon of the year, it was agreed

that Walſingham ſhould engage their paſſage in the moſt commodious ſhip he could find; and though Roſalie, who dreaded nothing ſo much as being troubleſome to her benefactor, expreſſed but little of the anxiety ſhe ſuffered about her child, Walſingham underſtood her, and, without ſaying he ſhould do ſo, he took care to hire a veſſel in which there was a ſurgeon and a ſtock of medicines. It had lately been engaged to bring over an Engliſh nobleman for the recovery of his health, and the accommodations and medical attendant, which had been engaged for him, ſeemed moſt fortunately at hand for Roſalie. The price demanded Walſingham gave at once, with a farther ſum on condition that the captain ſhould immediately depart, without waiting for any other paſſengers. Money is ſo forcible an advocate, that the captain was convinced it was his intereſt to comply with this requeſt, and every thing was ſoon ready.

In little more than a week from her landing at Marſeilles, Roſalie embarked for

for England, having written from thence to Naples, and encloſed her letter to Montalbert to the Engliſh Miniſter.

During a very proſperous voyage Walſingham behaved to her with the affection of a brother; but as they had now loſt the ſociety of the Chevalier de Montagny, who uſed, with great propriety, to break their too-frequent tête-à-têtes, Walſingham lived more in his own cabin than he had done when they were on board the Malteſe veſſel, and was, or affected to be, engaged in the ſtudy of Arabic, in which language he had purchaſed ſome curious manuſcripts at Marſeilles. When theſe ſtudies happened to be the ſubject of his converſation with Roſalie, he ſaid he was making himſelf acquainted with Arabic, becauſe, having already viſited almoſt every part of Europe, he thought his next voyage would be to Aſia. He frequently repeated this before the captain and the doctor, as they called, a ſurgeon's mate who was on board, and they, as well as the ſailors, who heard the ſame thing from Walſingham's

ham's ſervant, could not but wonder that ſuch a young man, who was happy enough to have ſo very pretty a woman belong to him, ſhould be of ſo reſtleſs a diſpoſition. That Roſalie was his miſtreſs they none of them at all doubted, notwithſtanding his reſerved and reſpectful behaviour towards her; but he was too rich and too generous for them to make ſuch remarks, as they would certainly have indulged themſelves in, had their paſſengers been of inferior fortune.

Though to ſee England had been the firſt wiſh of Roſalie's heart ever ſince the miſerable day that drove her from Sicily, though ſhe knew all her friends ſhe had on earth were to be found there, and though ſhe had perſuaded herſelf ſhe ſhould meet Montalbert there, yet, as ſhe approached it, her anxiety became exceſſive; and when the man at the maſt head cried Land! as they entered the Channel, her heart beat, as if, in a few moments, her deſtiny was to be decided. Now like clouds, doubtful and indiſtinct, the

the white cliffs roſe above the horizon; and now they gradually became more viſible, till, at length, from the deck were diſcerned thoſe towering boundaries of the coaſt; which——

" Conſpicuous many a league, the mariner
" Bound homeward, and, in hope, already there,
" Greets with three cheers exulting!!!"

COWPER.

Roſalie gazed at them with eyes filled with tears, and ſilently demanded—" Is Montalbert there?—Ah! do the friends—the few friends that love me, yet exiſt?"—While Walſingham, though from different motives, ſeemed to be affected in the ſame manner, he, alas! knew, that England held only the aſhes of her whom he had loved; but though tempted to ſay——

" Sento l'aura mia anlica; e i dolci colli
" Veggio apparir onde'l bel lume naeque
" Che tenne gli occhi miei, mentr'al ciel piaque
" Bramoſi, e lieti; or li tien triſti, e molli
" O caduche ſperanze, o penſier folli!
" Vedove l'erbe, e torbido ſon l'acque: &c."

PETRARCH.

Yet,

Yet, amidſt this natural and juſt regret, which he had hitherto been proved to nouriſh, he was conſcious that, if when they went on ſhore, he was to take leave of Roſalie, he ſhould feel a new deprivation, which would make all his wounds bleed afreſh.

This ſentiment, however, he ventured not to communicate to her, nor had he ever yet found courage to aſk her what were her intentions, or how ſhe meant to diſpoſe of herſelf after they landed at Falmouth, where he had engaged the ſhip to put them aſhore?—When within an hour's ſail, with trembling and heſitation, which he vainly endeavoured to conquer, he at laſt inquired to what part of England ſhe meant to go?

Roſalie, though ſhe had conſidered this before, had never ſteadily thought on what would be her beſt plan to purſue. Since, however, as it was now neceſſary to determine on ſomething, ſhe ſaid ſhe would wait wherever ſhe landed, or in the neareſt convenient town, till ſhe could receive letters

letters from Mrs. Vyvian, to whom ſhe meant immediately to write, under cover to Mrs. Leffington, the only means by which ſhe could be ſure of a letter reaching her. The heart of Roſalie ſunk when ſhe recollected the ſtate of health in which ſhe had left her mother, and when her mind ran back to the many months of her abſence, ſhe trembled to reflect on what might, in ſuch an interval, have been the conſequence of that injured health, and of, perhaps, increaſing anxiety. All her hopes were centered in her mother; from her only ſhe could receive protection and comfort—from her only obtain information of Montalbert; till, therefore, ſhe could hear of Mrs. Vyvian, ſhe could herſelf form no ſettled plan.

She related as much to Walſingham as appeared neceſſary to account for her remaining in whatever part of England ſhe landed, till ſhe had anſwers to the letters ſhe ſhould write immediately on her arrival. He obſerved to her, that it would then

then be much better for her to be at an eaſier diſtance from London, and propoſed that, inſtead of landing at Falmouth, he ſhould engage the captain to go on to Portſmouth, for which the wind was extremely favourable. Roſalie readily aſſented; ſince ſhe ſhould in that country be very near the place which ſhe once conſidered as her home. One of thoſe, whom ſhe had believed her ſiſter, was an inhabitant of Chicheſter, another reſided not far from thence; and though ſhe felt no inclination to appear before theſe her relations, while her ſituation was liable to miſinterpretations, yet there was ſomething conſoling in the reflection that ſhe ſhould be within reach of ſome perſons ſhe knew, and who could have no reaſon, when they were informed ſhe was the wife of Mr. Montalbert, to be otherwiſe than proud of the connection.

The ſame fears that had diſturbed Roſalie at Marſeilles, for the health of her infant boy, aſſailed her when ſhe landed with him at Portſmouth. There was no

reſource

ſource for that evening but an inn; this and many other conſiderations induced her to wiſh to quit the town as ſoon as poſſible; and now ſhe thought with confuſion and anguiſh of mind, which had been leſs felt while they were both citizens of the world, that ſhe was entirely dependent for ſubſiſtence on the friendſhip of Walſingham, to whom ſhe was already but too much obliged. How could ſhe reconcile this to pride, or to propriety? Yet there was no remedy; for till ſhe could receive anſwers from Mrs. Vyvian, what reſource had ſhe?—The conduct of Mr. Walſingham had been delicate and generous; the more ſhe was unavoidably in his power, the more reſerved he became. But though ſhe knew her own innocence, and was aſſured of his honour, ſhe could not recollect, without apprehenſion, that ſhe was now in her native country; that ſhe had quitted it without daring to avow her marriage, and had ſince been loſt to all her former connections; that ſhe now muſt appear in a very equivocal

character,

character, and that few would liſten to, and fewer ſtill believe, an account of the extraordinary circumſtances that had brought her into her preſent ſituation. Circumſcribed, as was her knowledge of the world, ſhe had ſeen enough of it to know that a very moderate ſhare of beauty excites the envy of every woman who has leſs, and that there are crowds of goſſipping people, to whom ſuch a ſtory, as her's appeared to be, would afford the higheſt gratification, and from whom it might excite the moſt cruel remarks.

To hide herſelf, therefore, from the eyes of curioſity and malevolence, till ſhe could appear properly acknowledged and protected, ought certainly to be her determination; but whither ſhould ſhe go, and by whom ſhould ſhe be guided?—It was not poſſible for her to communicate to Walſingham the painful ſenſations theſe reflections brought with them; but he ſaw them in her eyes, in her manner, and he heard them in the tremulous accents of her voice—yet he knew almoſt as little as

ſhe

ſhe did how to begin a converſation which every moment rendered more neceſſary. He ſat looking at her, as ſhe was writing to Mrs. Vyvian and Mrs. Leſſington, conſidering what he ought to ſay, when, having finiſhed her letters, Roſalie laid down the pen, and ſaid, in a half-whiſper, "And whither ſhall I tell my friends to direct their anſwers?"—— This, though rather a ſoliloquy than an addreſs to Walſingham, gave him occaſion to ſay, "You will determine, dear Madam, whither you like to go..... You will recollect, I hope, that I have only to obey you, and--------;" he heſitated—Roſalie, ſpeaking faintly, interrupted him.

"If I knew (ſaid ſhe) any village near this place---------."

"I mean not to dictate, (cried Walſingham, recovering himſelf). If you have no particular reaſons for wiſhing to be near Portſmouth, I think any, indeed almoſt every, ſituation equally within reach of London,

London, and of a daily poſt from thence, would be preferable. I have heard you ſpeak of having once lived in the neighbourhood of Chicheſter; it is at an eaſy diſtance from hence, and------."

"Oh! no—(ſaid Roſalie), not Chicheſter—I cannot go thither.....I do not (continued ſhe) wiſh to have it known there that I am in England till-----."

Walſingham did not give her time to finiſh the ſentence, but ſaid, "Would you then like to go nearer London, or to ſome retired place on the ſea coaſt, where, at this ſeaſon, there will be very few people, and where you may meet with accommodations, in regard to lodgings, which country towns do not afford?"

"That would certainly be the moſt eligible, (replied Roſalie). I have no wiſh to approach London, (added ſhe ſighing), till I know what hope there is of my meeting there, or at leaſt hearing there of, Mr. Montalbert."

"Have

"Have you ever viſited any of theſe villages on the coaſt? (inquired Walſingham);—Is there one you prefer?"

"I was once at Eaſtbourne, (anſwered ſhe, and it was at this time of the year. I remember thinking the country around it extremely pleaſant, and there was then no company, or only one or two invalids."

"I know the place, (ſaid Walſingham), and I believe you cannot fix better. It is neceſſary to determine, becauſe you muſt give your friends your addreſs before the poſt goes out."

"I will ſay then, that at the poſt-office at Eaſtbourne my letters are to be left.—But—I cannot help feeling uneaſy that the wife of Mr. Montalbert ſhould appear; perhaps I am wrong, Sir—but my ſituation is a very delicate one..... I could wiſh my real name were not known till my family owns me-----" ſhe ſtopped; but Walſingham ſaw ſhe meant more than ſhe had courage to utter.——"My dear Madam, (ſaid he), that is a matter on which

which I cannot even give my opinion; your own good ſenſe muſt decide upon it. You will determine, (ſaid he, getting up and leaving the room), and when you have done ſo, I will ſet out myſelf to ſecure your accommodations, as I conclude you will go from hence as early as you can."

Left then to decide for herſelf, and having very little time to do ſo, ſhe haſtily reſolved to drop her own name till ſhe heard from her mother, and requeſted that the anſwers ſhe ſolicited might be encloſed to Mrs. Sheffield, (the firſt name that occurred to her), to be left at the poſt-office Eaſtbourne. Having ſealed and ſent out her letter, Walſingham returned. He heard what ſhe had done, and then ſaid, that as ſhe might now travel in perfect ſecurity, attended only by a ſervant, he would, with her permiſſion, go on firſt, beſpeak poſt-horſes on the road, and procure her lodgings at the place ſhe had fixed upon—adding, "I will give proper directions to Waters, (his ſervant), ſo that you

you will have no trouble, and, I hope, not much fatigue..... You will ſleep on the road!"

"If you think it neceſſary, (anſwered Roſalie); but I do not recollect the diſtance, nor the ſtages, having never travelled along the coaſt. It will not be neceſſary, I ſuppoſe, to ſleep at Chicheſter?"

Walſingham anſwered that he thought Brighthelmſtone would be preferable, and then ſaid, "I ſhall ſee you on Saturday at Eaſtbourne, I hope in health and ſafety; and afterwards (continued he, half-ſuppreſſing a ſigh) I ſhall—that is, you know, I *muſt* take my leave, and once more, unleſs I can be of any farther uſe to you, become a diſſipated wanderer, ſeeking for ſomething that may ſupply the place of happineſs."

Then, without ſtaying to hear thoſe thanks which Roſalie endeavoured to utter, he departed, and in about a quarter of an hour Waters came to her with a letter, which he told her his maſter, who

was gone, had left for her. The man then desired to know at what hour the next morning she would be pleased to have the chaise ready, and, having received her orders, went away, leaving her to peruse her letter.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXX.

LETTER.

THERE are a thouſand occaſions in life, in which I feel that writing is better than ſpeaking. When either the perſon I am ſpeaking to, or the matter I am ſpeaking upon, intereſts me greatly, I am the worſt orator in the world; and, therefore, my fair fellow traveller, I write to you, for you muſt be convinced that I am deeply concerned for you and for your future happineſs.

Though I have not the pleaſure of being acquainted with Mr. Montalbert, yet I will flatter myſelf that, when we meet, I ſhall find in him another friend.

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He muſt be generous, amiable, and candid, for he is beloved by Roſalie; but as we know not when he will return, and as I am, according to the opinion of the world, too young for a guardian, we muſt—ah! how cruel a neceſſity!—ſubmit to the rigid ordinances of prudence; and, though I own to you that I ſhall relinquiſh the greateſt pleaſure of my life when I leave you, yet I mean to remain no longer at the village, whither you are going, than to ſee you ſettled. This, I know, is what I ought to do, ſince, however diſintereſted my regard for you may be, the world is too uncandid, and too little refined, to give me credit for poſſeſſing ſuch ſentiments. You are infinitely amiable, and I am probably allowed no more virtue than other young men, though I hope and I think I have never deſerved the character of a libertine..... All this, my dear Madam, you could not ſay to me, but I know you have thought it. Half my acquaintance would laugh at *me* for ſaying it, but

but I am accuſtomed to do what I know to be right, and to diſregard every kind of cenſure which is not incurred by actions really bad.

With this turn of mind, and after what I have ſaid, you will believe that I would not propoſe any ſcheme, merely to gratify myſelf, which ſhould break in upon the regulations that ſeem neceſſary for your ſake; nor will I, without your approbation, execute that I have in view. A friend of mine has a houſe at Haſtings, whither he goes with his family for a month or two in the autumn, the only time when his engagements at the bar allows him to be abſent from London. I once paſſed a few days with him there, and I am on that footing of intimacy which allows me to aſk for the uſe of his houſe. He knows that I am an unſettled itinerant, and will not be ſurpriſed at my ſudden appearance in England, although he has loſt ſight of me for eighteen or twenty months, and believes me either in Spain,

Portugal, or Italy; I ſhall tell him (what is true) that I am come home for a ſhort time; that it is not convenient for me to be ſo far from London as at my own houſe in the weſt; and that this, united with a wiſh of being retired, are my reaſons for borrowing his houſe at Haſtings: I ſhall be within ſuch a diſtance as to have continually the power of learning how and when I may be ſerviceable to you..... Will you then give me your permiſſion to remain there?—My viſits to Eaſtbourne ſhall be regulated by your orders, and ſurely the moſt vigilant and cenſorious prudery cannot object to the friendly and unfrequent viſits of a brother to a ſiſter. Oh! would you were really my ſiſter, with what delight ſhould I then avow the intereſt I take in your happineſs; ſuppoſe yourſelf to be ſo, I entreat you, and honour me by accepting the encloſed without ever mentioning the ſubject, leſt I ſhould doubt your honouring me with that eſteem as to allow me to uſe the affectionate

tionate names of friend and brother, when I am permitted to aſſure you of the regard and eſteem of,

Dear Madam,

Your moſt faithful
and obliged ſervant,
F. WALSINGHAM.

The encloſure was a bank note of a hundred and fifty pounds.

Roſalie, whoſe tears had fallen, ſhe hardly knew why, while ſhe read this letter, could not immediately determine how ſhe ought to anſwer it. She had, it was true, time enough to conſider it on her journey, but it hung upon her ſpirits, and drove ſleep from her eyes. After placing, however, in every point of view, the intention which he ſo delicately aſked her permiſſion to execute, ſhe thought there would be not only prudery and ingratitude in refuſing her aſſent, but that it would ſhew a miſtruſt, which ſhe ſaw as degrading to herſelf and unjuſt towards him. The money which he ſent her gave

her more concern, yet ſhe conſidered that it was leſs uneaſy to her feelings to receive it in this manner, than to be laid under the painful neceſſity of applying to him for ſmall ſums, ſhould ſhe wait long for the letters ſhe expected, and, till they arrived, what other reſource had ſhe?—The hope, ever alive in her heart, that Montalbert would ſoon return, and gratefully repay all the pecuniary favours ſhe owed Walſingham, reconciled her to this temporary obligation, which ſhe knew could be no inconvenience to him.

In the morning ſhe aroſe, impatient to begin her journey, and ſent for Waters to get the note changed in order to pay her expences; but he informed her, that it was already done, and that his maſter had given him directions for the journey in the ſame manner as when he travelled himſelf.

Roſalie, her Marſeilloiſe maid Claudine, and the object of her conſtant ſolicitude, her child, were placed in a chaiſe, which Waters had hired for the whole journey, to

to avoid the trouble and delay of changing the baggage, and they were very ſoon at Chicheſter. As ſhe paſſed through that town, and ſat at the door of the inn, while the horſes were putting to, a thouſand recollections crowded upon her mind. The objects, formerly ſo familiar to her, brought back the days of Roſalie Leſſington, and the ſtrange viciſſitudes that had happened ſince ſeemed rather like the fictions of romance than reality; ſhe was then the daughter of a village curate, humbled by her ſuppoſed ſiſters, and ſhrinking with terror from paternal authority, which ſeemed likely to compel her to marry a man ſhe diſliked. Her preſent ſituation formed a ſtrong contraſt to that ſhe was then in; but was it better?—She was now the daughter of parents who did not own her, a wife without a huſband, and the mother of an infant who ſeemed to have been born to miſfortunes. While ſhe indulged theſe mournful thoughts ſhe did not venture to ſhew herſelf, leſt ſhe ſhould be known; this

precaution was fortunate, for juſt before the horſes were put to her chaiſe, her former admirer, Hughſon, mounted on an ungovernable horſe, pranced up to the ſide of it. The beaſt was impatient to enter the ſtable; the chaiſe in which Roſalie ſat was immediately before the gateway of the inn-yard, and Hughſon, ever ſolicitous to ſhew his horſemanſhip, (though he now little thought to whom), ſpurred and irritated his horſe; it began to rear and kick with a violence, which, for a moment, made her apprehend ſome miſchief to the chaiſe that might compel her to get out. This fear, however, laſted but a moment; the conteſt between the horſe and his rider, the latter of whom ſeemed much the leaſt rational of the two, was ended, at leaſt in that ſpot, for the former ſpringing away with great ſwiftneſs was inſtantly out of ſight, while the boys and people in the ſtreet, ſtaring after him, exclaimed, "That Parſon Hughſon's horſe had run'd clear away wi un."

Fortunately

Fortunately it was the contrary road to that which Roſalie was going; but the carriage had hardly proceeded ten paces farther before ſhe ſaw Blagham walking with a gentleman of the neighbourhood whom ſhe well remembered. She now rejoiced that ſhe was going to a diſtance from theſe her old acquaintance, whoſe notice and intruſion it was improbable ſhe could have eſcaped had ſhe remained at any place within their reach; a conſideration which had confirmed her reſolution of going into the eaſtern part of the county.

The remainder of her journey paſſed without any particular occurrence or accident. She often amuſed herſelf by calculating the time when it was probable Montalbert would receive the letter which ſhe had written to him from Marſeilles; but this depended ſo much on circumſtances, that there was no date on which her mind could reſt with ſatisfaction.—The time when ſhe might aſſure herſelf of an anſwer from her real, and her ſup-

poſed, mother, was more eaſily aſcertained, and to that ſhe looked forward with the hope of having much of her preſent uncertainty and uneaſineſs alleviated. Juſt before the chaiſe mounted the high down immediately before the village, ſhe ſaw Walſingham watching for her approach. He did not, however, ſtop the chaiſe, but gave Waters a direction to the houſe he had taken, that there might be no neceſſity for her to drive firſt to an inn. Roſalie was preſently ſet down at the door of this houſe, which, though the moſt retired, was one of the moſt commodious lodgings in the village; when her baggage was taken out, and the chaiſe diſcharged, Walſingham made his appearance. He inquired eagerly how ſhe found herſelf after her journey, and how her little boy was?—then aſked, if ſhe approved of her apartments?—He told her dinner was ready, and ſolicited leave to dine with her, adding, that he had a chaiſe ready to carry him away as ſoon as dinner was over. All this paſſed with a rapidity which Roſalie

ſalie eaſily ſaw was intended to prevent any converſation on the ſubject of his letter; and, indeed, ſhe had neither courage or inclination to enter upon it at that moment. Dinner was ſerved immediately; it paſſed in common converſation, Roſalie trying, but not very ſucceſsfully, to bear her part. It was hardly over, and the ſervant withdrawn, when Waters came in to ſay that the chaiſe, his maſter had ordered, was ready at the inn. Walſingham directed him to put his baggage into it, and wait there till he came; then, turning to Roſalie, he gravely ſaid——

"And now, dear Madam, it depends upon you to decide whither I ſhall go? If you think there is the leaſt impropriety in my ſtaying ſo near you at Haſtings, I will direct my courſe to London.... Alas! (added he), no place affords me happineſs; and I have at this time no other purpoſe than to contribute what may be in my power to yours."

Roſalie, pained and confuſed, knew not what to anſwer. A ſenſe of all the obligations

gations ſhe owed to this excellent friend preſſed heavily on her mind; ſhe believed thoſe obligations had been conferred with the moſt diſintereſted views, and, cautious as he ſeemed to be to avoid every other interpretation, ſhe thought that to inſiſt on his wholly quitting the country, becauſe ſhe reſided in it, would be not only a needleſs and abſurd piece of prudery, but imply a doubt of his motives; ſhe was conſcious too of her unprotected ſituation, and could not but be ſenſible that to have this friend within a ſhort diſtance was a moſt deſirable circumſtance for her; neither did ſhe imagine, as nothing was known of her, and but little of him in this country, that cenſure could find food for its malevolence in their reſiding, perhaps, for a ſhort time only, within miles of each other. After ſome heſitation, therefore, ſhe told him, that ſuch was her opinion of his good ſenſe, and ſuch her conviction of the real friendſhip he bore her, that ſhe was perſuaded ſhe might leave it entirely to him to act as was moſt agreeable

agreeable or convenient to himſelf; at the ſame time ſhe took from her pocket the bank note he had encloſed to her, entreating him to allow her to return it.

The concluſion of Roſalie's ſpeech ſeemed to hurt, as much as the beginning of it had gratified, Walſingham.—"Ah! Mrs. Montalbert, (ſaid he), can you talk of the few ſervices I have had the good fortune to render you, and yet mention ſuch a trifle as that?—I beſeech you do not mortify me, by ſuffering any obligation of this nature to dwell on your mind."

Roſalie, however, inſiſted on giving him an acknowledgment of it in writing, to which he unwillingly conſented. He then entreated her to let him know the moment ſhe heard from her friends; aſked if he might not ride over ſome morning about the time ſhe expected her letters, as he had ſent for his horſes. Having received her aſſent, and tenderly careſſed her little boy, he left her with viſible reluctance, and, going to the inn, threw himſelf into the

the poſt-chaiſe that was to convey him to Haſtings.

Roſalie, being now left alone, endeavoured to calm her ſpirits, ſo long the ſport of incertitude and anxiety. Nothing could immediately occur to diſturb her tranſient quiet, for it was yet ſome days before it was poſſible for her to receive the anſwers from Mrs. Leſſington, which ſhe had ſo earneſtly ſolicited. It might even be prolonged, if, as was poſſible, Mrs. Vyvian was in the north.

Roſalie found that every thing had been ſettled in her new abode, where the people of the houſe were to attend her. The woman was very civil, and ſeemed to have no curioſity to learn more than ſhe had been told of her new lodger, whom Walſingham had repreſented as a young lady, his diſtant relation, who was in expectation of her huſband from Italy, and that her ſtay at Eaſtbourne was uncertain. It might be only a few weeks, or it might be much longer. An uncertainty that afforded

forded a proſpect of great advantage to the landlady, while the liberality, with which her terms had been agreed to, aided the favourable impreſſion that could hardly fail to be given by the innocence, beauty, and ſweetneſs of Roſalie's countenance and manner.

Claudine, carrying the infant boy, was the conſtant companion of her miſtreſs's walks, which beguiled the greateſt part of every day, and were varied between the green and ſhady lanes, open downs, or the immediate borders of the ſea. On the ſea itſelf Roſalie often fixed her eyes for hours, and her imagination went forth in conjectures about Montalbert, which became leſs and leſs pleaſant as time ſtole on. From theſe penſive wanderings ſhe conſtantly returned at the hours when letters were delivered, and impatiently inquired if there were any addreſſed to Mrs. Sheffield; but a week wore away, and none arrived; yet it was certain that ſhe might have had an anſwer in that time; Walſingham too had reckoned the termination

mination of a week as a period when intelligence was almoſt certain, and he, therefore, availed himſelf of the permiſſion he had received to come over.—Roſalie rejoiced to ſee him, and ſought not to conceal the ſatisfaction it gave her, while he appeared more dejected and melancholy than ſhe had ever yet known. He had now no object in view on which to exerciſe his benevolence; nothing to rouſe him from the deſpondence which ſo frequently obſcured the faculties of his mind; and to this cauſe, Roſalie, who knew from obſervation that he required ſome generous motive for active exertion, attributed the gloom which hung over him.

This heavy depreſſion of ſpirits ſeemed to break away after he had converſed with her an hour or two, and, in proportion as ſhe appeared uneaſy at the delay of Mrs. Leſſington's anſwer, he found reaſons to appeaſe that fiend Inquietude. At length they began to converſe on indifferent ſubjects, and, during their walk

on

on the hill, attended by Claudine, who was always directed to follow them, Walſingham inſenſibly led the diſcourſe to his own hiſtory and affairs. He talked of his family, and lamented that he was left an iſolated being in the world. "I have now (ſaid he) no nearer relation than a couſin of nearly my own age, who inherits a very large fortune from another branch of my family, and from his mother, who was an heireſs; but our diſpoſitions and our purſuits are ſo different, that we never aſſociate, and have rarely met in England but on ſome family buſineſs.—Sommers Walſingham is one of the moſt gay and diſſipated young men about town; plays a great deal, and has eſtabliſhments and connections in a ſtyle of expence, where I have little inclination to rival him. He was abroad when I was there laſt; the French and Italians, among whom we occaſionally met, were ſo dazzled by the ſuperior ſplendour of this my magnificent couſin, that they diſtinguiſhed him by the title of Milor Walſingham, while I was only

only Le Chevalier. I have often thought it ſingularly unfortunate, that the only remaining relation I have ſhould be a man with whom I cannot be on a footing of friendſhip, eſpecially as when I die, for I ſhall now never marry, he will poſſeſs all my landed property, which is entailed on the next male heir."

"I hope (ſaid Roſalie) that you will live very long to enjoy it yourſelf, and then tranſmit it to a family of your own."

"There *was* (anſwered Walſingham) a time when I thought I might be ſo happy—but that is now over!—For me, all proſpect, all poſſibiltiy, of happineſs is vaniſhed—never, alas! to return."——A long and mournful pauſe now enſued, which Roſalie had no courage to break, though ſhe would fain have ſpoken words of conſolation. Walſingham at laſt, ſpeaking lower, and in a more dejected tone, went on———

"For every evil, but that which I have endured, there may be a remedy—but the

the death of what we love!——Do you think there can be any ſorrow ſo deep, and ſo incurable?"

"Yes, (anſwered Roſalie, believing that he found a ſort of melancholy relief in this converſation), I think the eſtrangement of thoſe we love may be almoſt as dreadful as their death - - - - - - - - - - -." She could not proceed—for ſhe was ſenſible that ſhould either of theſe calamities aſſail her, ſhould Montalbert have deſerted her, or ſhould death have divided him from her for ever, ſhe ſhould totally fail in that fortitude which ſhe wiſhed to recommend to her friend; and finding her voice refuſe to continue the argument with firmneſs, ſhe was glad of the interruption now given by Claudine, who, coming near her, ſaid, "Madame, Voila la belle Dame qui m'a ſi ſouvent loit depuis deux jours, et qui fait tant des careſſes a notre petit."——Roſalie, who had hitherto avoided the very few ſtrangers who were occaſionally ſeen in the village, was now ſo near the perſon of whom Claudine

Claudine ſpoke, that ſhe could not eſcape her. But as ſhe by no means deſired to cultivate the acquaintance Claudine had thus begun, ſhe haſtily paſſed on, while the lady ſtopt the Frenchwoman, to whom ſhe ſpoke in her own language with great eaſe and volubility. Her figure was very ſingular; ſhe was not young, and her dreſs (then leſs common than now) was in that ſtyle which women affect who are above all prejudices, and look in a morning as if they paſſed their whole lives in the ſtable or the kennel; but though the habit and half boots might be ſymptoms of a maſculine ſpirit, which ſome have believed to be the ſame thing as a maſculine underſtanding, the pains which had evidently been taken about her face, which was very highly coloured, might convince the moſt ſuperficial obſerver, that the toilet of this fair Amazonian was by no means neglected.

"Surely (ſaid Walſingham) I have often ſeen that lady; it is, I think, a face familiar

familiar to me in public places; I cannot, at this moment, recollect her name."

"I hope (ſaid Roſalie) *I* ſhall not be under the neceſſity of making any acquaintance with her; do you think ſhe is ſtaying here?"

"Probably, (anſwered he); but you may eaſily avoid her.....Nothing is more common than for people, who are, what they fancy, retired for a few weeks to ſome of theſe places, to live in a conſtant exerciſe of the moſt impertinent curioſity. Oh! I believe I now recollect who that is."

"She has ſometimes a friend with her, (ſaid Roſalie), a younger woman, and of a leſs manlike appearance; but though they live, as Claudine tells me, in the ſame houſe, and the other ſcorns to be a ſort of companion, I obſerve ſhe is often ſitting with a book in her hand, and frequently ſeems meditating or compoſing."

To this Walſingham did not anſwer, and, during the reſt of their walk, which

Walſingham

Walſingham ſought purpoſely to lengthen by going about the woody environs of the nobleman's houſe * in the neighbourhood, he appeared to ſink into more than his former dejection. It was now late in the month of June, and the ſun was declining in all the radiance of that delicious month; Roſalie, to whoſe recollection it brought the evening ſky, which ſhe had ſo often, with a deſpairing heart, contemplated from Formiſcuſa, made ſome remark on the beauty of the ſcene; to which Walſingham, looking a moment earneſtly and mournfully in her face, ſaid ſighing, yet with a kind of impatient quickneſs——

"Ah! do not talk to me of the ſplendour of the ſun—of the beauty of nature! All—all is dead to me!—I enjoy nothing-------" then pauſing, he added, in a low and plaintive voice———

* Lord George Cavendiſh's.

"Mon

" Mon Cœur n'a plus rien ſur la terre
" Je ne peux plus aimer, je ne peux mourir
" Pune et ſainte amitié, doux charme de la vie
" Je t'immolai l'amour; mais qu'il m'en couté
" Rends du moins le repos a mon ame flettie
" On dit que tu ſuffis pour la felicité
" Loin de me ſoulager, tu comble ma miſere
" Je remplis mon deſtin, je ſuis nés pour ſouffrir.
" Mon cœur n'a plus rien ſur la terre
" Je ne peux plus aimer; je ne peux mourir."

Then pauſing, he repeated the laſt lines with ſome little variation——

" Mon cœur n'a plus rien ſur la terre
" Ah! je n'oſe plus aimer, et ne peux mourir."

Roſalie, who underſtood perfectly the force of theſe pathetic lines, could not help being ſenſibly affected. She did not know they were a quotation *; and was at once ſurpriſed and pained by the particular manner in which the two laſt lines were a ſecond time ſpoken. Equally unwilling and unable to make any remarks on what ſhe had heard, and Walſingham

* From the Galatie of the Chevalier de Florian.

appearing to be diſinclined to converſe, they both continued ſilent till they reached a place where one path led to the inn, and another to the habitation of Roſalie; Walſingham there wiſhed her a good evening, and telling her he ſhould be over again ſoon, to know if her letters were arrived, he departed.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXI.

ANOTHER week paſſed, and no letters!—Roſalie, who became every hour more uneaſy, now wiſhed to conſult Walſingham whether ſhe ought not to write again, and was even forming ſchemes to find Charles Vyvian, who might, perhaps, be in England, in which caſe her friend could greatly have aſſiſted her, but Walſingham appeared not. In the mean time, in her walks, Roſalie continually met the lady who had made an acquaintance with her little boy, and, who often courteſying to her as they paſſed, engaged her almoſt unavoidably to return the civility. Her abode, indeed, was no longer ſo retired as it had been.

In proportion as the ſummer advanced, ſeveral families, who ſhunned the more

gay and populous bathing places, arrived; and though none of them, except the lady in queſtion, appeared at all diſpoſed to make any acquaintance, Roſalie, who fancied herſelf the object of curioſity, was compelled to ſeek walks, more diſtant from the village, among the fields that aroſe behind it, or on a part of the ſands farther from the general reſort.

Every hour of her life was now embittered by increaſing anxiety; for another, another, and another day paſſed without the anſwer ſhe expected from Mrs. Leſſington. At length ſhe received, to her utter diſmay and confuſion, the letters ſhe had herſelf written. That to Mrs. Leſſington had been opened at the poſt-office, and was now ſealed with the office ſeal, while on the cover was written—— "*No ſuch perſon at Hampſtead*;" and again, "*Left Hampſtead, no direction to be got whither gone.*"——The encloſure to Mrs. Vyvian was unopened.

The conſternation and diſtreſs of Roſalie were now extreme, nor did ſhe know what

what ſteps to take. After ſo many days of anxious ſuſpenſe, ſhe was farther than ever removed from the hopes of procuring that protection which ſhe felt to be every day more neceſſary; farther than ever removed from acceſs to the only channel by which ſhe might hope for intelligence of Montalbert, ſhe now repented that ſhe had felt ſo much reluctance to ſee or write to Mr. and Mrs. Blagham in her way from Portſmouth, and that ſhe had not written, on her firſt arrival, to her other (ſome time) ſiſter, Mrs. Grierſon, either of whom could have informed her of Mrs. Leſſington's having left Hampſtead; a circumſtance which had never occurred to her as poſſible, becauſe not very probable.

To repair as immediately as ſhe could an error, which ſhe now ſuſpected had ariſen from falſe pride and falſe ſhame, ſhe thought, although late, of making theſe applications; but having been ſo much accuſtomed to rely on the opinion of Walſingham, ſhe heſitated whether ſhe

ought to take any meaſure without his participation. So many days had elapſed without his coming, that ſhe thought he was, perhaps, gone to London, or had other engagements, and that his return might be uncertain. Indeed were he to be conſulted, it would be impoſſible for him to give his opinion, ſince he neither knew the ſingular ſituation Roſalie was in as to her real mother, or the characters of the perſons to whom ſhe thought of applying. She recollected them, at leaſt thoſe of Blagham and his aſſociates, with pain. If they appeared diſguſting to her, when ſhe had hardly been in ſocieties of more elegance, they were likely to appear inſupportable now that ſhe had been accuſtomed to the intelligence and poliſhed manners of Montalbert and Walſingham, to whom might be added Alozzi and De Montagny, who were men of faſhion in their reſpective countries. But this contraſt was not all that was likely to make Blagham appear diſguſting to her; ſhe dreaded his coarſe raillery on her

her ſudden departure from England, which ſhe knew had been told in a manner very different from the truth, while the events ſhe had to relate, as leading to her preſent circumſtances, were ſo uncommon, and ſo little within the comprehenſion of people whoſe ideas had never travelled ten miles from their own homes, that ſhe imagined ſhe ſhould inevitably expoſe herſelf to vulgar ridicule and malignant cenſure. The abſence of Montalbert, and the preſence of Walſingham, might be equally injurious to her reputation.

To the lingering ſuſpenſe, therefore, in which ſhe muſt remain, unleſs ſhe adopted this expedient, any thing was preferable, and ſhe determined to wait no more than one day, in which, if Walſingham did not appear, ſhe would write to Mrs. Grierſon and Mrs. Blagham, at the ſame time, and nearly in the ſame terms, that ſhe might offend neither. The day paſſed, and Walſingham neither came nor ſent. That evening, therefore, ſhe ſat down in a very dejected ſtate of mind to compoſe

theſe letters. Roſalie wrote with great eaſe and correctneſs; but, though what ſhe now wiſhed to expreſs required but few words, ſhe never undertook a taſk which ſhe found more difficult to perform.

To addreſs two perſons as her "dear ſiſters," who, ſhe knew, were not related to her, was extremely irkſome; that title, when they lived together under the ſame roof, and were called the children of the ſame parents, had obtained for her but little of their affection, and now, that ſhe had been long eſtranged from them, ſhe was afraid it would not procure her common civility. If ſhe was conſidered by them as returning in an equivocal ſituation, they might repulſe her as likely to need pecuniary aſſiſtance; if, on the contrary, ſhe repreſented herſelf as the wife of Montalbert, a man whoſe fortune and rank in life was ſo much ſuperior to thoſe of the men they had married, ſhe was ſure of exciting their envy and indignation.—— It was better, however, to be envied than pitied, and, knowing herſelf to be Montalbert's

talbert's wife, ſhe could not determine to appear in any other light, repenting that ſhe had ever called herſelf by another name, for which ſhe now thought her reaſons were not ſufficiently ſtrong, and had been too haſtily adopted.

At length ſhe finiſhed her two letters; in each of which ſhe briefly ſtated her being returned to England without her huſband, a circumſtance which had ariſen from events too tedious to relate; and ſhe concluded with requeſting to know where Mrs. Leſſington was to be heard of, and whether her brother William, (the eldeſt Leſſington, to whom ſhe gave that name without reluctance), was ſtill at Oxford. The uncertainty of this, as he was in expectation of a college living when ſhe left England, was the only reaſon why ſhe did not firſt apply to him.

Amid the extreme diſquiet, which Roſalie was in about her mother, ſhe could not but feel wonder and uneaſineſs at the long abſence of Walſingham, who had now been more than a week without ſee-

ing her. The recollection of the melancholy ſtate of mind, in which he laſt parted from her, added to her concern; for ſhe fancied he might be ill, and ſhe was too ſure he was unhappy. Yet ſhe ſaw the impropriety of communicating theſe fears to him, or even of expreſſing impatience at his not coming, when he might, perhaps, have other engagements; ſhe knew, therefore, that ſhe ought to wait, without impatience, his promiſed viſit.

The little Montalbert was now between ſix and ſeven months old, and, from his ſtrength and ſize, appeared to be more. Claudine was extremely fond and very careful of him, and was often entruſted with the care of him during a ſhort walk; while Roſalie, who dreaded the obſervations that ſhe found were made upon her, confined herſelf more to the houſe.

Claudine, who was a lively Provinçale, was by no means ſo averſe to ſociety; and, though her miſtreſs always directed her to go with the child into the moſt unfrequented

unfrequented walks, ſhe generally contrived to find ſome admirable reaſon for chuſing that where ſhe was ſure to meet " Des beaux Meſſieurs tres poli, ou quelques dames bien honnête; qui parloient un peu le Francois, et qui avoient tant, mais tant de bontis, pour elle, et tant de joli choſes, a dire a ſon petit bon homme que c'etoit une charme."

Roſalie knew that her maid could tell nothing of her real ſituation, becauſe ſhe was ignorant of it, but ſhe feared infinitely more what ſhe might imagine, though the girl was always told that Mr. Walſingham was only a friend, who had taken care of her to England; and, though ſhe had never ſeen any circumſtance in his behaviour to contradict ſuch an idea, yet Roſalie fancied ſhe had, more than once, marked a ſort of arch incredulity in the features of Claudine: but as ſhe could not ſet about aſſuring her he was a mere friend, becauſe that would rather confirm than avert ſuſpicion, ſhe contented herſelf

with forbidding her to anſwer any queſtions that might be made by ſtrangers, doubting, however, whether ſhe would obey the injunction.

Roſalie, who ſaw new faces arrive at the place every day, occaſionally formed wiſhes for a reſidence more ſecluded.—Yet when ſhe conſidered that as ſoon as ſhe could obtain intelligence of her mother, ſhe ſhould probably remove nearer to her; and when ſhe adverted to the convenience of being in the houſe with very civil and quiet people, ſhe thought herſelf hardly authoriſed to propoſe a change. She ſhould undoubtedly have an anſwer very ſoon from one, or both her ſiſters, which might put an end, at leaſt in a great meaſure, to her preſent uncertainty.

Three days, however, paſſed before ſhe found at the poſt-office the following letter———

"Dear

" DEAR MADAM,

" THEY ſay that wondering makes one grow old, ſo my Kate and I will not wonder, but muſt confeſs ourſelves a little ſurpriſed at hearing you were ſo near us, and had ſtolen a march upon us, when we thought you were among your Signors and Signoras, Italianos, and people quite out of our line; and my Kate is not ſo ready in the writing way as ſome ladies, (which I don't reckon among her faults I promiſe you), ſo you'l excuſe my replying to yours of 2d inſt.—To be ſure you muſt have dropped from the clouds, and have been quite in terra incognita, not to know that our good mother has quitted Hampſtead theſe five or ſix months. I ſettled he raffairs there for her when I went up on the matter of Poulcat verſus Perriwinkle laſt Hilary; and ſhe went to live with her ſon Francis, who, you know, was always a ſort of favourite; but there was a rumpus at the houſe of Crab and Widget

Widgett, and he quitted and ſettled with his new-married wife at Carliſle. Sir Francis*, when the King pleaſes, has picked up a pretty fortune I aſſure you, and is better off than our Epiſcopus, who has alſo married a wife, and ſo loſt his fellowſhip; but he's got a living, though a ſmall one, and I dare ſay will have a houſe full of ſons and daughters. As to our olive branches, they flouriſh and increaſe, and my Kate has no chance of ſeeing much of the world this year, as we expect a third before its end; but as I muſt be at Grinſtead, in a few days, for the ſummer aſſize, where I've three capital cauſes, I'll juſt peep upon you in my way. As to the Vyvians, you know, they are grand folks, much above our cut, ſo that we know nothing of them more than what every body knows. I heard that there *was* treaties going forward for the

* By theſe names Mr. Blagham diſtinguiſhed the two ſons of Mr. Leſſington.

ſale

ſale of Holmwood, but the entail made by *old* Montalbert could not be dock'd till the heir is of age; and they ſay he's not over and above willing to accommodate Papa and Mama: but more of this when we meet.—I am ſomewhat at a non plus how to direct, as my Kitty and I wonder why you ſhould have an alias to your name; but I ſuppoſe you have good reaſons.

I am, dear Madam,
Your humble ſervant,
JASPER BLAGHAM.

Chicheſter,
July 4, 1784."

The other letter ran thus:———

"MADAM,

"YOUR's we received.—My wife not being very well, this ſerves to inform you that Mrs. Leſſington is at Carliſle, at Mr. Frank's, who is gone to live there, and ſhe with him. I do not know that any other direction is required. My wife

wife heard from her about ſix weeks ago; ſhe was then in good health: wiſhing the ſame to you, with my wife's love and ſervice,

I am, Madam,
Your very humble ſervant,
DANIEL GRIERSON.

Brockhurſt Upton Farm,
July 4, 1784."

Though Roſalie had no reaſon to expect any other kind of letters than theſe from her two brothers-in-law, or rather thoſe whom ſhe had ſuppoſed ſuch, her heart, naturally tender and affectionate, ſunk in chill deſpondence when ſhe reflected on the little regard there ſeemed to exiſt for her, among perſons who had been accuſtomed to conſider her as of their own blood; and who, ſhe believed, had never been undeceived.—" Surely, (ſaid ſhe), had one of them been caſt alone and unprotected into my neighbourhood, I ſhould not have heſitated a moment in

flying

flying to their aſſiſtance."——Alas! had ſhe known more of the world, ſhe would have found this conduct of her ſuppoſed family too common to excite a moment's wonder; ſhe would have ſeen that the man of law deſired to reconnoitre her ſituation before he ventured even to profeſs kindneſs, leſt he ſhould find her in circumſtances that might make ſuch kindneſs expenſive; while the gentleman farmer had no inclination to invite to his houſe a relation of his wife's, who was either humbled enough to give them ſome trouble, or in a ſtyle of life to mortify his wife by ſuperior elegance, and give her occaſion to make compariſons which might render her, who had been reckoned a great beauty, diſcontented with the inferior lot ſhe had choſen. The coldneſs, however, of theſe letters, gave her only momentary pain; but ſhe reflected with longer and more acute uneaſineſs, that the intelligence ſhe had gained was not only unſatisfactory, but ſuch as baffled the

hopes

CHAP. XXXII.

THREE of theſe ſad days were paſſed without any change in the ſituation of Roſalie; early on the morning of the fourth Walſingham appeared.

The moment he approached her ſhe was ſtruck with the expreſſion of his countenance, where deſpair rather than dejection was marked; and, as intelligence relative to Montalbert was ever preſent to her mind, ſhe was ſtruck with the idea that Walſingham had learned, and was come to communicate, ſome evil that had befallen her huſband. Without giving herſelf time to conſider the probability of this, ſhe advanced haſtily towards him, and, with extreme emotion, inquired what ſad tidings he brought her?——Walſingham,

ham, who perhaps rather expected a gentle reproach, for his long abſence, than this ſudden interrogatory, anſwered, dejectedly and ſomewhat coldly—"What have I to tell you, my dear Madam?—Alas! I have nothing *new* to tell you!"

Roſalie, checked and hurt by his manner and his anſwer, and not able immediately to recover herſelf from the emotion which ſhe had felt, could only ſay faintly, "I beg your pardon; I thought—I fancied—I am ſo unhappy, (added ſhe), that every thing alarms me."

She ſat down, and Walſingham, moved by the ſight of her diſtreſs, advanced towards her, and ſaid, "If I had learnt any good news, my amiable friend, I ſhould not have been abſent ſo long, for I ſhould have been eager to have communicated whatever might give you pleaſure; if bad news that related to you, ſo unwilling am I to give you pain, that I fear, *at this time*, my ſpirits would ſhrink from ſo cruel, though, perhaps, ſo neceſſary an exertion of friendſhip."

"Have

"Have you *yourſelf* any new cauſe of uneaſineſs? (inquired Roſalie in a low and faltering voice)—I hope not!"

"Ah! Mrs. Montalbert, (replied Walſingham), does there then need any new cauſe?—Does, indeed, my unhappineſs admit of addition?"

Roſalie, ſtill doubting whether ſome calamity was not known to Walſingham which he had not the courage to tell her, related, in a few words, the circumſtances that occurred ſince they laſt met; of her having the letter returned that ſhe had ſent to Mrs. Leſſington, and the unſatiſfactory anſwers ſhe had received from Mr. Blagham and Mr. Grierſon.—Walſingham read the two letters, and then ſaid, "But what, my dear Madam, could you expect from theſe ſort of people—I am ſorry you applied to them."—Then thinking that he had ſpoken too contemptuouſly of Roſalie's relations, he added, "I only mean to ſay, that, from the ſlight ſketches you have give me of theſe

gentlemen

gentlemen in our desultory conversations on your affairs, it appears as if they were of an order of beings so different from her to whom I have the honour to speak, that nothing more than common civility could be expected of them."

"Their letters, I think, (said Rosalie, forcing a smile), hardly amount to that; but perceiving I had only to repair, as expeditiously as I could, the delay that has arisen, I have written to Mrs. Lessington according to the direction I obtained."

Walsingham then turned the conversation on indifferent subjects; but his thoughts appeared to be distracted, and his heart heavy. The morning was well calculated for exercise, for the sun, which was at that season too powerful at an early hour, was obscured by clouds, though without any immediate appearance of rain or storm—Rosalie, therefore, proposed to Walsingham a walk on the Downs, flattering herself that the gloom on his spirits might be dissipated by the pleasure he usually took

in

in pointing out, with a degree of enthuſiaſm peculiar to himſelf, the various appearances of the ſea, or the changing ſhadows of the landſcape. Walſingham of courſe declared himſelf ready to wait on her, and they were juſt leaving the houſe, followed as uſual by Claudine, when a ſmug pert figure came up to them, who looked as if he took great pains to appear like a gentleman, with very little ſucceſs. To Walſingham he was unknown; but Roſalie immediately recogniſed Mr. Blagham, who, not at all abaſhed by ſeeing a ſtranger with her, pranced up to her, exclaiming, "Ah! my ſweet ſiſter-in-law, I have met you then at laſt! Long-parted friends, you know, (continued he, familiarly ſaluting her)—with this gentleman's leave, who, I ſuppoſe, is your ſpouſe."—Roſalie, covered with bluſhes, anſwered coldly, "No, Sir—that is *not* Mr. Montalbert;" and then aſking after Mrs. Blagham, ſhe invited him in, though heartily wiſhing that he might not accept the invitation.

"But

"But you were going to walk, (ſaid he)—I beg I mayn't be any hindrance. I can't ſtay a moment—my head is full of buſineſs; a great number of cauſes I aſſure you.... You know my way?—— Vaſtly anxious always—eh!——and have hardly time to turn myſelf about. Well! but you look purely, my fair Roſe!—I can't help remembering your former name, you ſee: you look charmingly—ſtill as killing as ever—lilies and roſes!—When ſhall we ſee Mr. Montalbert in England?"

"That is uncertain," replied Roſalie, who ſaw that, as Blagham was ſpeaking, he turned his eyes inquiſitively on Walſingham, with a look, as if to ſay—Ah! ah! Sir, who are you?"

Walſingham, ſuſpecting that he might be the object of impertinent curioſity, and feeling already a decided averſion to Blagham, thought he ſhould at once relieve Roſalie and himſelf by leaving her; he therefore ſaid, that, as ſhe was engaged, he would not now detain her, but

would take his walk. Roſalie did not know, and yet dared not aſk, whether ſhe ſhould ſee him again before he returned to Haſtings, for ſhe had yet many things to conſult him upon. She ſaw him go with regret, and it was not without an effort that ſhe concealed from Blagham what ſhe ſuffered by this interruption.—Forcing, however, an appearance of tranquillity ſhe was far from feeling, and recollecting that ſhe had now an opportunity of learning the particulars ſhe ſo much wiſhed to know in regard to the Vyvian family, ſhe affected to liſten with intereſt to the long detail Mr. Blagham gave her of his own affairs, which, he ſaid, were very proſperous and flouriſhing; "and (then adding) you don't know all I have had to do with your poor quondam lover, little Hughſon..... Egad! the poor fellow was over head in ears—in love—and, faith, in debt too. I had a fine time on't with Old Square-toes his daddy, to make him down with the needful; but *at* laſt we got it all ſettled,

tled, and *I* patched up his pocket, poor rogue, though his heart was in a cruel plight for a long time!"

"If he had had no other grievances, (ſaid Roſalie), I think your friendſhip would have been put to no ſevere teſt; but pray tell me how and where are the Vyvians; I have been ſo circumſtanced ſince I have been abroad as to have had no opportunity of hearing of them."

"Why, I can give you as to thoſe perſonages but little information: for ſince the young lady came down to Holmwood, they have never once been there, and it ſeems ſhe took ſuch a diſlike to it, that, as the family were never likely to inhabit it, the Old Magnifico was trying to ſell it."

"What young lady? (aſked Roſalie); I don't comprehend who you mean."

"Why, the fine lady that he married—Miſs ---------- Miſs ---------- the Honourable Miſs ----------;—Well! I have a vile memory for names. However, ſhe was young enough to be his

daughter, and belonged to a Lord's family, the lady he married."

"Who married?" cried Roſalie faintly.

"Why Old Vyvian.... He married in leſs than half a year——faith, I think they ſaid it was not above three months after the death of his wife."

"Gracious God! (exclaimed Roſalie, thrown quite off her guard by this ſhocking intelligence);——Dead!—my dear, dear benefactreſs—my beſt friend-----" Stunned, by a blow ſo cruel and unexpected, ſhe became extremely giddy, a cold dew covered her face, and ſhe leaned againſt the ſide of the window on the ſeat of which ſhe was ſitting. Blagham, who fancied ſhe was going to faint, began to call for help, and to ring the bell. Claudine was out with the child, Roſalie having ſent her when ſhe returned herſelf with Blagham; but Mrs. Hammond, the landlady, and her maid appeared, and the former, terrified at the pale countenance of her lodger, beſtirred herſelf notably for ſalts, hartſhorn, and water, exclaiming,

ing, at the ſame time, " Dear Madam, how ill you are!—Pray let me ſend for ſomebody.—Bleſs me I wiſh the gentleman was here—ſhall I ſend Jane to call him?"——" Oh!—no, no!"—was all Roſalie could ſay; but Jane, judging that nothing is ſo great a cordial as a friend, and having a very high opinion of Walſingham, from the liberality ſhe had experienced from him, ran away without any farther orders, and Roſalie had not recovered from the firſt ſhock her ſenſes had received, before Walſingham, who had not been far from the houſe, came in, and, agitated as much as the half-dead mourner before him, inquired, regardleſs of the preſence of Blagham, what had been ſaid to alarm her thus; then, turning in evident diſpleaſure to Blagham, he cried, " Surely, Sir, this is very extraordinary!"

" I'm ſure I think ſo, Sir, (anſwered the attorney, who did not half like the looks of Walſingham); for I had no notion that Mrs. Vyvian's death could have

affected Miſs Roſe——that is Mrs.----- Mrs. Montalbert I mean, in ſuch a manner, or I ſhould have ſpoke on't more cautiouſly; but ſome people are ſo nervous.—Come, dear Ma'am, cheer up:—why have a little more philoſophy—we muſt all die.... The poor lady, you know, had been for a long time in a declining way!"

Roſalie, to whom every word was as a dagger, now aroſe, and ſaying ſhe felt herſelf too ill to remain below, wiſhed Blagham a good morning, and tried to add her love to his wife, with ſome other of theſe common-place ſayings, that expreſs much and mean nothing; but finding herſelf unable to articulate, ſhe leaned on Mrs. Hammond's arm, and retired to her own room.

Blagham in the mean time had his curioſity awakened, which he was determined to ſatisfy. Many doubts aroſe as to the reality of Roſalie's marriage. He found her with a gentleman, whom ſhe acknowledged not to be her huſband: he

ſaw

ſaw that he took a deep intereſt in whatever concerned her.... Who was he then, and in what ſituation was this young woman?—Why be directed to in one name, and yet acknowledge another?

Blagham now attempted to enter into converſation with Walſingham, who, diſliking him too much to take the trouble of being civil at any rate, and now half-diſtracted by his fears for Roſalie, hardly gave himſelf the trouble to anſwer him, but walked out of the houſe, in hopes, that when he was gone, Blagham would quit it alſo.

But this was ill-judged, inaſmuch, as under the pretence of inquiring after the health of *the lady*, Blagham now obtained an opportunity of making ſeveral queſtions to the maid as to the gentleman—who, he learned, came with her, took the lodgings for her, and often viſited her; he heard too, that his name was Walſingham, and that he was, in the ſimple phraſe of Jane, "A vaſtly rich gentleman, quite as rich as a nobleman, and prodigious fond

both of Madam and little Maſter, though he wa'nt no near relation, only a couſin, or the like of that - - - - -."

Jane would have told more had ſhe known it, but her intelligence went no farther beyond this, than that "Madam came from foreign parts;" for Waters, who was both ſenſible and faithful, had adhered punctilioufly to his maſter's ſtrict injunctions, and had never mentioned more of him than his name and his fortune.

Blagham, however, had gathered much for malignant conjecture, and, as the people, with whom he was travelling to Eaſt Grinſtead, were by this time ready for their early dinner, he now quitted the lodgings of Roſalie, leaving his compliments and a meſſage, that he hoped to hear ſhe was better.

Poor Walſingham was in the mean time walking up and down a little ſheltered lane near the houſe. He had never till this happened been ſo ſuddenly alarmed for Roſalie, and he now felt the full and painful conviction how much his affection

for

for her had exceeded the bounds he had at firſt preſcribed, and thought he ſhould ever have preſcribed to it in his boſom. The death of Mrs. Vyvian, on whom alone, he knew, ſhe relied for protection, though he knew not all the claims ſhe had to it, ſeemed to have thrown her more than ever into his power, and made her more than before the object of his ſolicitude and friendſhip; and he was ſhocked at being compelled to acknowledge to himſelf, that this friendſhip was no longer diſintereſted. He had long been conſcious, that, while he talked of his eternal attachment to the memory of another woman, he could have found conſolation for every loſs, if Roſalie had lived only for him; and this conſciouſneſs was the true reaſon why he had abſented himſelf ſo long, in the hope that he might, by degrees, wean himſelf from the indulgence of a paſſion, which, if Montalbert ſtill lived, was at once diſhonourable and deſperate. The ill ſucceſs of this experiment had given him that look of melan-

choly, and of unuſual depreſſion, which had ſo much alarmed Roſalie when ſhe firſt ſaw him in the morning.

Walſingham, from a riſing ground, where he was not himſelf perceived, marked the departure of Blagham, and returned to the houſe.

Roſalie had, on the ſight of her child, been relieved by a flood of tears, and her oppreſſed heart now ſought ſtill farther eaſe in the conſoling voice of a friend, himſelf acquainted with ſorrow: every prudiſh ſcruple vaniſhed from the real diſtreſs of her mind; ſhe wanted ſomebody to whom ſhe might talk of her loſt benefactreſs, and whoſe ſympathy would ſooth her ſtill burſting heart.

Inſtead, however, of hearing from him ſuch ſentences of conſolation as are uſually adminiſtered, inſtead of being adviſed to have fortitude and patience, and recommended to ſubmit to inevitable evils, Walſingham ſat down and wept with her, and, without trying to check a ſenſibility, which moſt men would have

bluſhed

bluſhed at as a weakneſs, he ſeemed to ſeize the opportunity of deploring anew his own misfortunes; though unconſcious that Roſalie lamented the death of a mother, he thought the loſs of the friend of her early youth was a calamity great enough to juſtify the ſorrow ſhe expreſſed. Violent paroxyſms of grief are ſeldom mitigated by common-place arguments. Walſingham therefore acted, perhaps, more kindly, in yielding to, rather than in reſiſting, the firſt expreſſions of agoniſing ſorrow. They ſubſided, and, though the tears ſtole ſlowly down her cheeks as ſhe ſpoke, yet Roſalie was ſufficiently compoſed to conſult with Walſingham on the ſteps ſhe had to take.

No poſſible channel of hearing from Montalbert occurred to her; ſhe knew not whither to addreſs herſelf to Charles Vyvian, or whether he was in England; and if the Abbé Hayward yet lived, he was alſo out of her reach: the changes that had taken place in the Vyvian family, ſince the new connection formed by its

maſter, had probably diſmiſſed all the old ſervants from Holmwood. Thither, however, Walſingham offered either to go himſelf, or ſend his ſervant; as nothing better occurred to him than to attempt gaining ſome intelligence of young Vyvian, while Roſalie, who ſtill thought Mrs. Leſſington her only ſure means of information, determined to wait an anſwer to the letter, which, when ſhe was able to write, he adviſed her ſending to Carliſle.

A ſilent and melancholy dinner, to which Walſingham ſtaid without being invited, was ſoon over. He then aſked Roſalie if air would not relieve the oppreſſion, of which, though ſhe did not complain of, it was eaſy to ſee hung over her.—"If you wiſh to be alone, (ſaid he), I will go; but, if you will ſuffer me to walk with you, I will not intrude on your ſorrows—I reſpect them too much."

"I believe (anſwered Roſalie) I ſhould be better in the air; but I dread meeting any one—indeed I am quite unfit to be ſeen!"

"You

" You need not be ſeen, (ſaid he); for by a path about a mile off, with which I am well acquainted by my former rambles along this coaſt, we may go without any hazardous deſcent down the rock quite to the ſea beach, and from thence along under the cliff called Beachy Head, where I think you may be aſſured we ſhall meet no one."——Roſalie faintly objected to this; for, as ſhe never went out unattended by Claudine carrying the child, ſhe thought the walk might, in his account, be rugged and dangerous. Walſingham, however, aſſured her that the path he ſpoke of led down to the ſhore by a deſcent of hardly ten yards, and that not ſteep; he added, with a forced and faint ſmile, " I undertake for the ſafe conduct of little Harry, and you may recollect that it is not the firſt time I have had the honour of being entruſted with your boy."—Theſe few words brought inſtantly to the mind of Roſalie the ſcene of her departure from Formiſcuſa, and all her obligations to Walſingham; his active ge-

neroſity

nerosity then, his unwearied friendship ſince, aroſe ſenſibly to her recollection.—"Ah! when—(thought ſhe)—when will Montalbert arrive to acknowledge our weight of obligation, and to repay as much as gratitude and attachment can repay this invaluable friend!....When will my huſband aſſiſt me in the taſk I cannot execute alone, of ſoothing his incurable ſorrows!—when indeed!——Montalbert!—where are you?——what has happened to you?——why ſeek you not the unfortunate Roſalie?——She is now, alas! deprived of all ſuccour but that of a ſtranger. .....Oh! come then—conſole with her the generous friend ſhe has found——mourn with her the mother ſhe has loſt!"

This melancholy ſoliloquy ſilently paſſed without Roſalie's anſwering, or ſeeming to attend to, what Walſingham had ſaid, though ſhe ſlowly followed the way which he led.

They hardly ſpoke during their walk, except that Roſalie, obſerving the heavy cloud that hung over the ſun, now ſinking

ing weſtward, inquired of Walſingham, if he did not think there would be a thunder ſtorm?—He anſwered, certainly not; and they proceeded ſtill ſilently, for neither were diſpoſed for converſation.

About half a mile to the eaſtward of their deſcent they reached that ſtupendous ſea mark, the high cliff called Beachy Head, which is ſeen half channel over, and is the firſt land made in croſſing from the oppoſite coaſt. On looking up towards its ſummit, Walſingham ſeemed to be ſtruck with ſome painful recollection; he pauſed a moment, and ſaid, ſighing, "Ah! how long it is ſince the ſight of this head-land made my heart bound with tranſport—ſince the cry of Beachy! Beachy! by the ſailors, after a night paſſed in ſtruggling againſt faint and contrary winds, announced the joyful appearance of an old friend—but now all local attachments are at an end!—England is ſtill my country, but I am more wretched, I think, in it than ever, much more wretched than when I am wandering about."

Roſalie,

Roſalie, by a deep ſigh, ſhewed that ſhe ſympathiſed in his unhappineſs, and another long pauſe enſued.

"In this cavern, (continued Walſingham, turning towards a deep excavation in the rock), Tradition ſays, a ſolitary being, of the name of Darby, took up his abode.... There are times when I am diſpoſed to try ſome ſuch experiment myſelf. I think I ſhould enjoy the horrors of a ſtorm, in a cave under Beachy Head. I can imagine the raging of the elements; the ſwelling and foaming of the mountain billows daſhing on the rock; and the iſolated hermit patiently awaiting the ſurge that ſhould overwhelm him..... I could fancy, even now fancy, the ſullen waves, which we actually hear breaking regularly and monotonouſly on the ſhore, to be the hollow murmur of the ſubſiding ſtorm. The ſolitary man having eſcaped the tempeſt, ventures forth from his cave!—he heard, amid the whirlwinds of the night, the cries of wretches driven on the inhoſpitable coaſt, then he could not ſave them!—

them!—but he now looks along the beach for their ſaid remains; he tries with his feeble hands to bury them.... He ſees a drowned man, which, another wave will caſt at his feet, he ſteps forward---."

"In God's ſake, Mr. Walſingham, (cried Roſalie ſhuddering), forbear to draw ſuch images of horror!"—"I will forbear, (anſwered he), if they diſtreſs you, Mrs. Montalbert, but to me they preſent not images of horror.....Ah! no—at this moment I envy thoſe who are dead; I almoſt wiſh *I* were ſo!"

Roſalie had often heard him talk in a deſponding ſtyle, but now there was in his manner dejection mixed with ſomething of wildneſs, that made her tremble. Stunned as her mind was by its recent loſs, every vague idea had force to torment her, and ſhe now again apprehended that Walſingham might know ſomething of Montalbert, which the agitation ſhe expreſſed at their meeting in the morning, might have deprived him of courage to tell her; and that he was, by this unuſual ſtyle of converſation,

converſation, preparing her for it; but a moment's reflection ſerved to diſſipate this fear. Had it been neceſſary to inflict another wound on her heart, it was not to a ſcene ſo remote as that which they were now in, that he would have led her; for he had ſeen in the morning how ill ſhe could bear ſuch intelligence as Blagham had abruptly given her.

Walſingham then was unhappy, more than uſually unhappy, and from ſome cauſe which did not perſonally concern Roſalie. The gratitude ſhe owed him, and the friendſhip ſhe felt for him, now called upon her to rouſe herſelf and appear leſs depreſſed, in hopes that *he* might become more calm. She tried, therefore, but evidently with effort, to ſpeak on common and unintereſting ſubjects. In their former converſations, Walſingham had frequently given her eaſy leſſons on botany, which, with almoſt every other ſcience, he underſtood, ſhe now, with a view to detach his mind from the ſubjects that ſo painfully engaged it, gathered a branch of the ſea poppy,

poppy, and another of the eryngium, that grew among the ſtones of the beach, and began to talk of marine plants, and of thoſe of ſtructure more ſingular which lived under the waves; ſhe remarked that theſe inhabiting the immediate margin of the ſea, apparently formed the link between marine and terraqueous vegetables, and was proceeding thus, when, looking at her with an expreſſion of countenance, which ſaid, as plainly as if he had ſpoken it—"Ah! you would not now have found ſpirits to talk on ſuch ſubjects, if you did not exert thoſe ſpirits for me!"——he ſaid———

"I am a miſerable being to-night, and fit for nothing that belongs to ſcience, or perhaps to reaſon. But as there are cold unfeeling mortals, who ſay, and perhaps truly, that poetry has nothing to do with either, I may poſſibly be the better diſpoſed to read to you what I once wrote, not many miles from this part of the coaſt of Suſſex. It was ſoon after my return from the continent, when I thought all

my

my fondeſt hopes of happineſs would be realiſed, but when I found them vaniſhed from my graſp for ever!—a friend, who loved me, would not ſuffer me to remain brooding over my ſorrows, at a houſe I had taken, (ah! how fruitleſsly taken), in London; but though it was late in the year, not far, indeed, from mid-winter, he was going to paſs a month at Brighthelmſtone, and he took me with him, careleſs of whither I went, and only deſiring not to be moleſted by condolence or inquiries.....For ſome time (continued Walſingham ſighing) the vigilant kindneſs of my friend would hardly ſuffer me out of his ſight. At length convinced that *I had courage to live*, he allowed me to do as I would, and the uſe I made of my liberty was to wander of a night along the beach, or on the cliffs, on which the ſea is continually encroaching. After a long ſucceſſion of ſtormy weather, with heavy rains, great fragments of rock fell on the belt of ſtones beneath: the craſh of their ſeparation and fall echoed along the

the ſhore, like thunder intermingled with the inceſſant roar of the wintry waves.... *My* gloomy diſpoſition was gratified in deſcribing the effect of this, and thus aſſimulating outward circumſtances to my own ſad ſenſations———

" The night flood *rakes* upon the ſtony ſhore,
" Along the rugged cliffs, and chalky caves,
" Mourns the hoarſe Ocean, ſeeming to deplore
" All that lie buried in his reſtleſs waves.—
" Mined, by corroſive tides, the hollow rock
" Falls prone; and, ruſhing from its turfy height,
" Shakes the broad beach, with long reſounding ſhock
" Loud thundering on the ear of ſullen night.—
" Above the deſolate and ſtormy deep,
" Gleams the wan moon by floating miſts oppreſs'd,
" Yet here, while youth, and health, and labour, ſleep,
" Alone I wander;—calm untroubled reſt,
' Nature's ſoft nurſe,' deſerts the ſigh-ſwollen breaſt,
" And flies the wretch, who only ' wakes to weep!"

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIII.

FROM the temper of mind which Roſalie was in, the lines ſhe had juſt heard Walſingham recite in a full yet mournful voice, could hardly fail of affecting her; and, while he a ſecond time repeated them at her requeſt, the tears ſlowly fell from her eyes, and it might poſſibly have been ſome time before ſhe was enough recovered from the mournful reverie into which ſhe had fallen, had not ſhe and Walſingham been equally ſtartled by the ſudden appearance of two females figures from behind a projection of the cliff, on a fragment of which they had been ſitting. One of them ſuddenly advancing to Walſingham, ſaid, " Upon my honour, my dear Sir, you muſt excuſe me if I break through

through common rules:—but I do ſo doat on talents—I am ſuch an enthuſiaſt in regard to poetry!——Your name is Walſingham, I think—I have often had the happineſs of hearing of you, and once of ſeeing you, at dear Mrs. Paramount's.—I ſhould be mortified—oh! mortified beyond meaſure, if I ſuppoſed it poſſible for you to forget it!"

Walſingham, very little delighted with this bold and abrupt addreſs, and recollecting at once who the lady was, determined to give her this meaſureleſs mortification.—He, therefore, anſwered drily, "That he was ſorry to ſay his memory refuſed him the pleaſure of acknowledging, as his acquaintance, a lady who did him ſo much honour."——Turning from him with an air of pique, the admirer of talents then addreſſed herſelf to Roſalie, and, with confidence, not at all checked by the coldneſs of her reception, ſaid, "I have been determined, my dear Madam, to make myſelf known to you ever ſince I firſt ſaw you, and your charming

boy.

boy.....What a ſweet creature!—a perfect angel!——I was told when firſt I ſaw you, that you were an Italian lady of rank, which only increaſed my violent inclination to be admitted among the number of your friends; but my acquaintance, Mademoiſelle Claudine, undeceived me."

Roſalie, recognizing the lady who had ſo often ſpoken to Claudine, was never ſo little willing as now to make her acquaintance, and was, in truth, unable to anſwer all theſe fine ſpeeches as the laws of common civility required; ſhe, therefore, ſuffered the ſtranger to proceed, only muttering ſomething which her new acquaintance deemed ſufficient encouragement for her to go on talking.

While this paſſed, the other lady ſidled up to Walſingham, and, in the ſofteſt whiſper of affectation, her head reclined, and her eyes half ſhut, ſaid, "Is it then indeed poſſible, that Mr. Walſingham can have ſuffered the remarkable traces Lady Llancarrick muſt leave on every heart, to be

be obliterated!—That wonderful being! whoſe talents, whoſe virtues, have been the admiration of the age in which we live—and whoſe perſon, worſhipped as it has been and is, is the leaſt of her aſtoniſhing perfections!"

Walſingham, however he abhorred every kind of affectation, might, at another time, have found a momentary amuſement in the fine ſentimental phraſes and ridiculous contorſions of this young woman. He recollected her to be a Miſs Gillman, whom he had ſeen at parties in town, and who had acquired the name of "*The Muſe.*" But he was at this time ſo diſguſted with her folly, and ſo impatient at being thus broke in upon, that nothing leſs than the conſideration of her being a woman, and in inferior circumſtances, (for ſhe was a humble dependent on the ſcientific dames of better fortune), could have induced him to even the little ſhew of civility with which he anſwered—"That it was his misfortune to have forgotten Lady

Llancarrick, owing, perhaps, to his long reſidence in other countries."——" Oh! then (eagerly interrupted Miſs Gillman) you have never, perhaps, ſeen any of her productions.—She writes the moſt divine things!—there is an originality or ſublimity undeſcribable in her compoſitions—the effect of the ſtrongeſt underſtanding guiding the amiable propenſities of the ſofteſt heart!—She did me the very high honour to deſire I would walk down to this ſingular ſcenery, where———

"The beetling rock frowns o'er the foaming tide."

For ſhe is writing ſomething wherein ſhe thought the wonders of nature might aſſiſt her imagination.....We were ſitting penſively together my friend invoking the muſe!—and I waiting in ſilence the happy effuſions of her fine fancy, when we were ſtruck with pleaſing ſurpriſe on hearing the beautiful lines you recited. They are, I am perſuaded, from your own ingenious pen—

pen—I hope you will give them to the world."

As little more was neceſſary in anſwer to this rhapſody than a bow, Walſingham now turned a ſorrowful look towards Roſalie, who was ſuffering even a ſeverer penance than he had undergone, and was much leſs able to diſengage herſelf.—They had riſen on the firſt appearance of Lady Llancarrick and her poetical aſſociate, and were now walking towards home; but this did not promiſe to afford them the means of eſcape, for the ladies declared they alſo were returning that way. Little more, however, was required during the remainder of their walk than to liſten: for Lady Llancarrick having now got ſomebody to hear her, to whom ſhe thought all the fine things ſhe had collected were entirely new, and who could not doubt of exciting wonder and admiration, was ſoaring into the moſt elevated regions—and common life and common ſenſe were left at an immeaſurable diſtance. She miſtook the ſilence of Wal-

ſingham (which aroſe from vexation and impatience) for profound attention and ſilent admiration. From the firſt time of meeting him, ſhe thought him an object well worth trying to attract, and wiſhed to find out the nature of his attachment to Roſalie; though, be it what it might, it impeded not her views, for it was one among her many real or affected ſingularities, that ſhe pretended to have the moſt profound contempt for beauty, while her own figure and face betrayed the great pains ſhe took to acquire or preſerve in her own perſon the advantage ſhe contemned.

She knew that Walſingham was reckoned a man of the firſt underſtanding and information, and was fully perſuaded that Roſalie's youth and beauty would be weak attractions, when oppoſed to her charms, and thoſe talents, which alone ſhe thought had power to fix a man of his genius.

Lady Llancarrick began life as a young woman whom accidental connections had raiſed into ſociety much above her fortune, and

and who thought herſelf happy to be put on a level with them by marrying Sir Lodowick Llancarrick, a Welſh Baronet: but having unſucceſsfully tried the charms of domeſtic felicity, ſhe had, for ſome years, been one of thoſe characters which the undiſtinguiſhing multitude have called—Veteran Women of Faſhion—High Flyers—and other appellations which are doubtleſs quite undeſerved..... The "univerval paſſion," according to Dr. Young's deſcription, was never more ſtrongly exemplified—never did a female breaſt pant ſo vehemently for fame as that of Lady Llancarrick; and, after many ſtruggles to raiſe herſelf to notoriety, ſhe found every eminence pre-occupied that might have been obtained by ſingularity of dreſs or demeanour; ſhe could not drive into the temple of Fame in a Phaeton, four in hand, without being incommoded by equal or ſuperior ſkill—or ride thither without being croſſed and joſtled; neither could ſhe leap a five-barred gate, or do many other feats to make people

ſtare, without having innumerable rivals. One avenue to immortality, however, was leſs crowded, and Lady Llancarrick followed it: ſhe became a poet and a politician—with a very moderate ſkill in her own language, ſhe was certainly a ſingular, if not a ſucceſsful, candidate for the Poetic Crown; but having neither the judgment that ariſes from natural good ſenſe, or that which is acquired by ſtudy, her political opinions, and her poetical flights, were equally inconſiſtent and abſurd. Together, however, they anſwered her purpoſe, for ſhe became *wonderful*, if not admirable: ſome humble retainers of the *Tuneful Nine* were always ready to celebrate her genius; and ſhe furniſhed ſo many paragraphs for the newſpapers, that the editors could hardly fail of being grateful.

But with ſo much genius could ſhe eſcape being ſuſceptible?—Alas!—no.—Many inſtances were given of the ſoftneſs of her heart, and many men of the very firſt world had been ſuppoſed to wear her chains.

chains. In proportion as theſe became fragile through time, ſhe had covered them with flowers, and almoſt the laſt fortunate captive, who had eſcaped this charming bondage, was Sommers Walſingham; which, perhaps, from family partiality, inſpired Lady Llancarrick with her preſent inclination to throw the ſame pleaſing fetters over his couſin.

Perfectly unconſcious, however, of her deſign, hardly hearing, and not at all attending to the excellent things ſhe was ſaying, Walſingham walked by her ſide, accuſing his deſtiny of cruelty in compelling him to part with Roſalie for ſome time, and to leave her in ſuch a ſtate of mind, without having an opportunity of ſaying to her much that he had poſtponed till he took leave, and which now appeared abſolutely neceſſary to his own peace, if not for the guidance and conſolation of his intereſting unhappy friend. Yet, however, he wiſhed to have a long converſation with Roſalie before he rode back to Haſtings, he was ſo perſuaded

that Lady Llancarrrick and Miſs Gillman had forced themſelves thus into his notice, only to gratify impertinent curioſity, or find ground for malignant remark in regard to Roſalie, that he determined, whatever it might coſt him, not to put it in their power. For a moment he thought of returning to her lodging, after they had ſhaken off their unwelcome companions; but, conſcious that ſo unuſual a viſit muſt excite the invidious remarks of the woman of the houſe, and ſuſpecting that Lady Llancarrick and her companion would watch his ſteps, he found himſelf compelled, on Roſalie's account, to relinquiſh the idea of ſeeing her again that evening; but rage and vexation ſeized him, and he no longer wore even the ſemblance of civility, though Lady Llancarrick did not, or would not, perceive it. Their way lay near the door of the inn where Walſingham's horſes were put up. His groom was walking before it waiting his orders; he called to him impatiently, and bade him bring the horſes out; they followed him

in

in an inſtant, when, approaching Roſalie, he wiſhed her a good night, and ſaid, in a low voice, that he would ſee her in a very few days; then, coldly bowing to the other two ladies, he mounted his horſe, and was out of ſight in a moment.

Roſalie, trying to ſuppreſs a ſigh that aroſe partly from regret at his going ſo ſuddenly, and partly from recollection of the ſtate of mind in which ſhe knew he was, was now very coldly and formally courteſying her good night to her two unwiſhed-for companions; but they did not intend to let her off ſo eaſily, and Lady Llancarrick, bidding her dear Gillman take the arm of her ſweet friend, ſaid, "Oh! we will ſee her ſafe to her lodgings, you know!"

The diſtance was not far, but Roſalie thought it now lengthened on purpoſe: both the ladies beſetting her with queſtions which ſhe could not anſwer truly, and would very fain have been excuſed from anſwering at all. Indeed, during the former part of their walk, while Lady

Llancarrick had engaged Walſingham, the gentle, ſentimental Erminia Eliza Gillman had, albeit in the ſweeteſt accents and with the moſt inſinuating ſoftneſs, put ſo many queſtions to poor Roſalie, that greater art and knowledge of the world, than ſhe poſſeſſed, would have been neceſſary to prevent the ſly ſentimentaliſt from diſcovering that there was a great deal of myſtery in her affairs, and that their obſcurity aroſe from their being of a nature which ſhe dared not reveal, yet knew not how artfully to hide.

When, at length, Roſalie was once more alone in her own parlour, all the events of the day revived in painful confuſion to her memory; but the death of her mother ſwallowed up every other ſorrow, and, with a flood of tears, ſhe accuſed herſelf of inſenſibility, for having, at ſuch a time, ſuffered any other conſideration to call off her thoughts a moment from that object of juſt and endleſs regret. Of the two ladies ſhe had ſeen, ſhe thought no more than to determine upon not continuing

nuing their acquaintance, and rather to quit the place than to aſſociate frequently with people ſo utterly diſagreeable.—Her heart heavy with regret, and her head aching from having wept ſo much during the day, ſhe drank a glaſs of water and haſtened to her bed, where the moſt tormenting reflections, on the cruel fate of her beloved mother, long prevented her taſting any repoſe. At length wearied nature gave her up to momentary forgetfulneſs; but ſhe had hardly ſlept an hour, when ſhe was awakened by one of the moſt violent ſtorms of thunder, lightning, wind, and hail, that ſhe ever recollected to have heard. For herſelf ſhe was unconſcious of apprehenſion, but claſping to her palpitating heart its only certain poſſeſſion, her lovely child, ſhe ſhrunk from the flaſhing fires which made their way through her window ſhutters; ſhe endeavoured, however, to appeaſe the fears of Claudine, who crept into her room half dead with terror, but ſuddenly, as ſhe was reaſoning with her maid, ſhe re-

collected that, from the time which had paſſed ſince Walſingham ſet out, it was impoſſible he could have reached Haſtings. Her apprehenſions, leſt any evil might befal him, and the idea that ſhe was the innocent cauſe of his being expoſed, became extremely painful to her boſom; ſhe yielded to thoſe gloomy thoughts which too frequently aggravate ſorrow—and exclaimed, " Alas! *I* am ſo unfortunate, that it ſeems as if I communicated calamity to all who are intereſted about me..... Born the child of proſcription, *I* deſtroyed the peace of my mother, and on my account it probably was, that my unhappy father was driven into exile!—Should *he* have ſurvived long years of calamity, I ſhall never behold him, never have an opportunity of expreſſing for him the filial tenderneſs I ſhould feel, or of weeping with him over the memory of my dear, dear mother. Again proſcribed in my marriage, I have, perhaps, undone Montalbert, and loaded him with the malediction of his mother..... Perhaps—oh!

oh! thought too terrible to be dwelt upon!——perhaps his tenderneſs for me may have coſt him his life, and he may have periſhed amid the ſulphurous gulphs and unwholeſome exhalations at Meſſina. —No, I will not encourage ſuch an idea. The precautions of his cruel mother counteracted it, and, by doing ſo, made my impriſonment and perſecution favours.— Alas! I have preſent evil enough without dwelling on the paſt.—The noble-minded, the diſintereſted Walſingham, ſeems to be infected with my unhappineſs; perhaps, even now, is the victim of his generous attention to me!—and you, dear little unconſcious companion of my woes, ſole ſweetener of my ſorrowful exiſtence, may not you one day lament that you were ever born?"

This reflection was too diſtreſſing—and an ardent prayer to Heaven, that *ſhe* alone might ſuffer, and that her boy might be as happy as ſhe was miſerable, ended the ſad ſoliloquy.—The violence of the tempeſt abated, but not till morning broke.

Roſalie,

Roſalie, after a ſhort interval of reſt, aroſe; ſhe heard from her maid, as well as from her other ſervant and the people of the houſe, melancholy details of the miſchief occaſioned by the lightning; of which ſome particulars were true, but the greater part much exaggerated, or wholly groundleſs.

Roſalie, ſtill depreſſed by the idea of Walſingham's poſſible danger, and by the effects of a ſleepleſs night, tried to ſhake off both her mental and perſonal uneaſineſs by a walk. It was an hour when ſhe hoped that ſhe might venture to the ſea ſide without meeting either of the ladies whom ſhe ſo much deſired to avoid. In this, however, ſhe was diſappointed:—they joined her as ſhe returned home; talked over the circumſtance of the ſtorm—Lady Llancarrick declaring that ſhe enjoyed its ſublime horrors, and Miſs Gillman tempering the ſame ſentiment, with delicately expreſſing concern for the fate of thoſe who might have ſuffered in it.

" Apropos,

" Apropos, (ſaid Lady Llancarrick)—my dear Mrs. Sheffield, do you know it came into our heads, as Gillman and I ſat together looking at the lightning over the ſea, that *our* agreeable acquaintance, Mr. Walſingham, could hardly have reached whatever place he was going to before the tempeſt came on:—he reſides, I think, at ſome diſtance?"

As ſhe ſaid this, ſhe fixed on Roſalie her fierce inquiring eyes. Roſalie, though no human being could be more void of offence, bluſhed deeply, and, before ſhe could form a reply, Walſingham's groom came up to her, and delivered a packet with his maſter's compliments, and he had orders to wait for an anſwer.

Roſalie now ſaw, in the countenances of the two ladies, an expreſſion which added, for a moment, to her pain and confuſion. Relieved, however, from the uneaſineſs ſhe had been in about Walſingham, ſhe felt all the dignity of conſcious innocence, and reſolved to diſregard

gard cenſure, which, whatever appearances might ſay, ſhe knew herſelf incapable of deſerving; ſhe recovered her compoſure, and telling the ſervant ſhe would return home and write an anſwer, which he might call for in a quarter of an hour, ſhe ſlightly wiſhed the two ladies a good morning, and left them.

Their curioſity, which was ſtrongly excited on many accounts, they ſcrupled not to attempt gratifying by queſtioning the ſervant; from whom, however, they obtained but little additional information. While theſe ladies were thus unworthily employed, Roſalie read the following letter from Walſingham———

LETTER.

"I was compelled to leave you, dear Madam, laſt night in an uneaſy ſtate of mind—for how could I be otherwiſe, when I ſaw you in ſuch depreſſed ſpirits; and I fear your new acquaintances are not

not of that deſcription of women, with whom, either in the hour of ſadneſs or gaiety, you would wiſh to aſſociate.—I hope, that if you find them too much diſpoſed to treſpaſs upon you, you will not ſuffer the fear of violating the common forms of ſociety to force you into the moſt uneaſy of all reſtraints, keeping up a ſhew of regard to conceal diſlike and diſguſt. I believe neither of them to be worthy of the friendſhip of Mrs. Montalbert. You know, I hope, that if this or any other circumſtance renders your preſent abode leſs agreeable to you, my ſervices ſhall be exerted to find one more eligible—but favour me with your commands immediately, as I ſhall go to-morrow to London, to plead with an old acquaintance of my father's on behalf of an unfortunate ſon, who, having two years ago married a young woman, whoſe only fault was her being deſtitute of fortune, has been abandoned by his family, and, having been brought up to no profeſſion,

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is in a very diſtreſſed ſituation, with a wife and two ſweet little children. I met him a few days before I had laſt the honour of ſeeing you, as he is here with his family; I bade him conſider what I could do to ſerve him, and he has deſired me to ſee his father on his behalf: perſuaded that I ſhould ſucceed in reſtoring him to comfort and his father. Without having very high ideas of my powers of perſuaſion, eſpecially when the hard-cold heart of avarice is to be moved, I will, however, make the attempt, and, unleſs there is any thing in which I can firſt have the pleaſure of being employed for you, Madam, I ſhall begin my journey to-morrow early. My friend's father lives in Nottinghamſhire.

" May the bearer of this bring me as favourable an account of your health and ſpirits as can be expected after the juſt concern you have ſo recently felt:—I hope you were not terrified by the tempeſt of laſt night. It overtook me on a place

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ſo wild and dreary, that I could have ſuppoſed it the ſcene where Shakeſpeare imagined the meeting between Macbeth and the Weird Siſters. The ſpot I allude to is a wide down; in ſome places ſcattered over with ſhort furze, in others barren even of turf, and the uncloathed chalk preſenting the idea of cold deſolation:—on the left is a ruined chapel, or ſmall pariſh church, in which ſervice is performed only once in ſix weeks; on the right are, in ſome places, marſhes that extend to the ſea—in others a broad ſpit of ſand and ſtones, where nature ſeems to refuſe ſuſtenance even to the half-marine plants, which, in moſt places, are thinly ſprinkled among the ſaltpetre of the beach.

" The hollow murmur of the diſtant ſea, on which the lightning faintly flaſhed, foretold the coming ſtorm ſome time before I reached this heath—there it overtook me; but as there are times when outward accidents make little or no impreſſion on me, I quickened not my pace; and

and ſhall I own it without incurring the charge of affected eccentricity, that I found a melancholy ſpecies of pleaſure in ſurveying the gloomy horrors of the ſcene——in fancying I was the only human being abroad, within the circuit of many miles—in cheriſhing the ſame ſpirit with which Young ſays in his Night Thoughts———

'Throughout the vaſt globe's wide circumference
'No being wakes but me.'

Yet I was more moderate, and more philoſophical in my ſombre enjoyment; and, when I came to my lodgings, I wrote what follows, which I beg you will put into the fire when you have read———.

"Swift fleet the billowy clouds along the ſky,
"Earth ſeems to ſhudder at the ſtorm-aghaſt;
"While only beings, as forlorn as I,
"Court the chill horrors of the howling blaſt.
"Even round yon crumbling walls, in ſearch of food,
"The ravenous owl forgoes his evening flight;
"And in his cave, within the deepeſt wood,
"The fox eludes the tempeſt of the night:—

"But,

" But, to my heart, congenial is the gloom
" Which hides me from a world I wiſh to ſhun—
" That ſcene, where ruin ſaps the moulding tomb,
" Suits with the ſadneſs of a wretch undone;
" Nor is the darkeſt ſhade, the keeneſt air,
" Black as my fate—or cold as my deſpair."

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXIV.

THE penſive, or rather gloomy diſpoſition in which Walſingham wrote, was but too congenial to the feelings of his unhappy correſpondent, who paſſed the reſt of the day in her houſe, indulging melancholy reflections. She was glad, however, that he was gone an excurſion likely to divert his thoughts, and knew that nothing ſo effectually won him from himſelf as ſuch a generous ſervice as he was now engaged in. The following day aroſe, and found her in the ſame dejected ſtate of mind; left alone, without even the expectation of ſeeing Walſingham, or of hearing any intelligence, which, he aſſured her, he would not fail to attempt collecting as to Montalbert, or Charles Vyvian, ſhe had nothing to look forward

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to but the anſwer ſhe yet hoped to re-ceive from Mrs. Leſſington; and ſhe reck-oned daily when the courſe of the poſt might give her, at leaſt, this melancholy ſatisfaction.

A mind, thus preying on itſelf, agitated by hopes and fears, and wearied by con-jectures, could only be relieved, at leaſt, for a few hours by books of amuſement. She had ſent to the only library in the place for two or three of theſe ſort of books, but finding them only pages of in-anity, which could not a moment arreſt her attention, ſhe determined, notwith-ſtanding her fears of again meeting Lady Llancarrick and Miſs Gillman, to go to the ſhop, and endeavour to pleaſe herſelf better. In doing ſo, ſhe was under the neceſſity of paſſing through that part of the village moſt frequented. Congratu-lating herſelf, however, on not having met any body, ſhe was returning, with her books in her hand, when her former per-ſecutors, ſuddenly advancing from their lodgings, joined her, and, with their uſual careleſs

careleſs eaſe, entered into diſcourſe with her, aſking ſeveral queſtions, and, when to evade theſe, ſhe turned the converſation on the books ſhe had been in ſearch of, the elder lady delivered her opinion of ſeveral celebrated and new productions, with a fluency which aſtoniſhed Roſalie, ſo much did it reſemble a diſſertation learned by heart, and remind Roſalie of Jenkinſon in the Vicar of Wakefield, who, whenever he met a ſtranger, began with—

"Sir, the coſmogony, or creation of the world," &c. &c.

Roſalie, however, better content to be a hearer than a ſpeaker, liſtened, or appeared to liſten, with perfect reſignation, internally reſolving, however, to take her leave as ſoon as ſhe arrived at the turning which led to her own lodgings, whether the harangue was finiſhed or not; ſhe walked, in the mean time, quietly along between the two ladies, (Miſs Gillman having taken her arm), and gazing on the ground, as if ſhe was counting the pepples, when two perſons haſtily approached,

proached, and a voice exclaimed—" It is ſhe!—it is my wife!——By Heavens it is herſelf! "——The voice was Montaltalbert's—Roſalie raiſed her eyes—it *was* Montalbert himſelf.

Almoſt unconſcious of what ſhe did, ſhe ſprang forward, and would have thrown herſelf into his arms, but he retired from her, with rage and reſentment in his countenance, which ſuddenly changing into an expreſſion of pity, he cried—" Lovely, loſt creature!—art thou, indeed, loſt to me?——Yes—for ever loſt!—and here—too well convinced that all I have heard is true—here we part for ever! "

Roſalie, who had advanced towards him, heard all this with a ſurprize and terror that deprived her of the power of utterance. She tried, however, to ſay, " For mercy's ſake, Montalbert, hear me! "—but ſeeing that he ſtill retreated from her, and that ſeizing the arm of the perſon with him, he even walked haſtily away; ſhe made a vain attempt to quicken her pace and follow him, but her trem-

bling limbs refuſed to ſecond her will—her head grew giddy, her heart ceaſed for a moment to beat, and ſhe would have fallen, had not Miſs Gillman, who, with Lady Llancarrick, beheld this ſcene with wonder, ſtepped forward and ſupported her.

In another moment ſhe recovered her ſenſes, and, looking wildly round her, exclaimed; "Where is he?——Where is Montalbert?——Lead me, if you have pity—lead me to him!.... Let me follow him—for God's ſake let me!"——Miſs Gillman, with the common phraſes uſed on ſuch occaſions, beſought her to be compoſed; Lady Llancarrick began to reaſon, and to prove very logically that nobody ought to give way to ſuch violent emotions. Her eyes, however, had followed Montalbert till he diſappeared;—though when Roſalie eagerly inquired which way he went, it was a piece of intelligence ſhe did not chuſe to communicate.

Roſalie,

Roſalie, when her ſenſes and recollection returned, deſired to go to her lodgings, but, as it was evident ſhe was incapable of walking thither without aſſiſtance, the two ladies of courſe attended her.—Miſs Gillman, in the few intervals allowed her, ſpoke moſt ſentimentally and pathetically, while the lady of ſuperior talents affected to argue on the impropriety of yielding to extravagant expreſſions of grief or joy—not without ſome hints, that ſhe could not comprehend how the gentleman they had ſeen could be the huſband of Mrs. Sheffield, and yet be called Montalbert. Roſalie attended to neither of her new friends; ſhe hardly knew who was with her; but, having formed a confuſed conjecture that Montalbert might be at her houſe, her eager eyes were inquiring for him the moment ſhe came in ſight of it. Claudine met her with the little boy; but Montalbert had not been there. In beholding her child, he recalled to her ſtartled ſenſes the conduct of his father, with his wild behaviour and ſtrange

expreſſions, and all the agitation of her ſpirits returned; but ſhe was relieved by a flood of tears, and ſobbed violently—while ſuch comfort or remonſtrance, as the ladies thought might either conſole or determine her to bear her diſtreſs with fortitude, were alternately adminiſtered.—Roſalie had nothing to anſwer. She wiſhed, though ſhe could not propoſe it, that they would leave her as the only kindneſs they could do her; and at length, the one having exhauſted all her ſentiment, and the other all her reaſoning, they went away, promiſing to call in the evening to ſee how ſhe did. Roſalie aſſured them ſhe ſhould be very well, and begged they would not trouble themſelves; ſhe affected a momentary tranquillity, to eſcape from a repetition of attentions, which, as they appeared to be well meant, ſhe could not rudely refuſe.

When they were gone, the aſtoniſhed and ſtunned mind of Roſalie returned to a new contemplation of the ſcene that had paſſed; when ſhe recalled the counte-

nance,

nance, the words, and the attitude, of Montalbert, it appeared, but too certain, that her actions had been miſrepreſented, and that jealouſy and anger poſſeſſed him. How could ſhe find—how appeaſe him?—Whither was he gone?—He had come in ſearch of her; was he then ſo prejudiced againſt her, that he would not even hear her, that he would not even ſee the child whom he had ſo paſſionately loved?—Theſe reflections, preſſing with painful violence on her mind, deprived her for ſome time of the calmneſs that might have enabled her to determine what ſhould be done. She ſometimes thought of going out to inquire for Montalbert, then found herſelf unequal to the dread of meeting him, whom ſhe had ſo long ſought and ſo tenderly beloved, only to have her heart pierced by ſounds of anger and reproach, from a voice in which ſhe had been uſed to liſten to the fondeſt language of adoring love.—She had no ſervant who either knew the perſon of Montalbert, or had ſufficient ſteadineſs and ſenſe to perform ſo delicate

a commiſſion as that which ſhe wiſhed to have executed. The woman of the houſe, though older and graver than Claudine, was very ignorant, and to her it would be impoſſible to explain ſuch a hiſtory as hers, and equally impoſſible to make her comprehend it. To her ever generous, conſiderate, and ſenſible friend, Walſingham, the thoughts of Roſalie naturally turned; but had he been ſtill at Haſtings, ſhe could not have ventured to have aſked his mediation. It was too evident, from the few incoherent words Montalbert had uttered, that his unkindneſs and violence originated in jealouſy, and of whom, beſides Walſingham, could he have conceived ſuch injurious ideas?

Amidſt theſe fluctuating thoughts one occurred to her, which compelled her to take ſome immediate reſolution. If ſhe could ſee Montalbert, when ſhe was leſs under the influence of ſurpriſe, ſhe thought ſhe could talk to him calmly, and ſhould be able to convince him that ſhe had never, even in idea, ſwerved from the faithful tenderneſs

tenderneſs ſhe owed him: but to avail herſelf of this hope no time was to be loſt. Montalbert might have left the village; and where was ſhe then to ſeek him, that he might hear her juſtification. Impreſſed then with a conviction that ſhe ought to find him inſtantly, ſhe was haſtening to leave the houſe, when the following note was delivered to her———

"THE father of the unfortunate child, known by the name of Henry Montalbert, requires to have him immediately delivered to the two perſons who attend for that purpoſe, and who will conduct him to

H. MONTALBERT."

Roſalie read this cruel order: ſhe ſtood for a moment like the ſtatue of deſpair—her blood circulated no longer; ſhe was choaked by the convulſive ſtruggles of her heart—but ſhe could not weep, ſhe could not even ſpeak. The two perſons, who were ſent for her child, appeared at

the door of the parlour into which ſhe had returned, and, at the ſame moment, by another door, Claudine entered with the little boy. Roſalie ſtarted up, and eagerly ſeizing him in her arms, uttered a few incoherent words—" They ſhall not take you from me, my child, (ſaid ſhe); let them rather kill me at once!"—Then, turning towards the man and woman, who approached without any apparent feeling for her inexpreſſible diſtreſs, ſhe cried, her voice half ſtifled by ſobs, " For mercy's ſake, whoever you are, lead me to Montalbert!—Do not, oh! as you hope for Heaven—do not execute his cruel order, but let me find him—I will carry my child to him myſelf!"

The man, who had a countenance which ſeemed made on purpoſe to execute ſuch commiſſions, anſwered, with ſullen coldneſs, " Madam, we can ſay nothing to all this—we muſt obey the order of our employer—we act legally, and cannot enter into any diſcuſſion.....Come, Mrs. Jacklin, we have no time to loſe."

So

So ſaying, he approached with his companion as if to take the child. Roſalie could only preſs her boy more cloſely to her breaſt, and, uttering a faint ſhriek, ſunk with him upon her knees—"Have mercy!—oh! have pity upon me!"—— was all ſhe could utter. The unfeeling man, regardleſs of her agonies, or of the tears and ſhrieks of Claudine, who wept, implored, and menaced, forced the child from the convulſive graſp of its apparently dying mother, and putting it into the arms of the woman, they haſtened from the houſe.

Roſalie, who had ſunk upon the floor, ſeemed, as if by a miracle, to recover herſelf. She roſe, and, with wild looks and ſwift ſteps, purſued the cruel wretches who had thus torn her child from her: but they were already out of ſight; her ſtreaming eyes ſought them in vain; her head became giddy; her ſenſes forſook her, and ſhe would have fallen had not Claudine caught her in her arms, and ſupported her till the woman of the houſe

coming to her aſſiſtance, they carried her between them into the houſe, inſenſible and apparently dead.

She was now placed on her bed, and the remedies uſual in ſuch caſes were adminiſtered; ſhe opened her eyes, and, eagerly fixing them on the face of Claudine, inquired for her child. Claudine could anſwer only by her tears. The miſerable mother then ſeized the hand of the woman of the houſe, conjuring her to go in ſearch of him: but recollecting how little ſuch a perſon could be intereſted, ſhe attempted to riſe herſelf, and again follow him. The women refuſed to ſuffer her, and endeavoured to appeaſe her by promiſes of going themſelves; but her impatience became greater, and ſhe raved, entreated, and wept, till the violence of her emotions exhauſted her, and ſhe ſunk in total depreſſion. A few moments ſufficed to recover her to a ſenſe of her miſery, and then the ſame ſad ſcene was renewed.

At

At length the woman of the houſe agreed to go out on inquiry, and ſomething like hope ſuſpended for a while the agonies Roſalie had ſuffered; but when the good woman came back, and related, though in the moſt cautious way ſhe could, that the child had been carried away in a poſt chaiſe by the two perſons who had fetched him from his mother—the unhappy Roſalie relapſed into all the horrors of deſpair. The whole night paſſed in incoherent ravings, in calling wildly for her child, or imploring the mercy of its father, while Claudine ſtood weeping on one ſide of the bed, and the landlady remonſtrating and praying on the other. Before morning her ſenſes ſeemed to have forſaken the wretched ſufferer: yet her ſtrength was ſo little impaired, that ſhe again inſiſted on being ſuffered to follow her child. She directed Claudine to get her a poſt chaiſe; then attempted to riſe and dreſs herſelf, till, giddy and ſick, ſhe ſunk again on the bed. Thither the woman of the houſe had by this time ſummoned an apo-

thecary, who began gravely to inquire into the cauſe of the agitation in which he ſaw his patient. Claudine could not explain it, and the good woman knew not how, ſo that, from what ſhe ſaid, the apothecary, concluding ſhe had loſt a child by death, commenced a grave harangue on ſubmiſſion and acquieſcence, which ſerved only to add to the tortures of the unfortunate young woman: nor was this gentleman, who really meant well, her only tormenter. Her landlady had ſent for Lady Llancarrick and Miſs Gillman, who, taking each their ſtation on the oppoſite ſides of her bed, began to adminiſter conſolation, ſuch as is uſually doled forth in ſet phraſes, with ſome difference, however, ariſing from character; for the lady ſpoke like a philoſopher; "*the Muſe*" like a ſentimentaliſt—while Roſalie, unable to anſwer either, repeated to herſelf in the anguiſh of her heart———

"She talks to me who never had a ſon." So totally unqualified were all theſe parties for the delicate office of comforting the

the afflicted, or ſo unfit was the mind of Roſalie for receiving conſolation, that, before evening, her ſpirits were agitated to a fearful degree; her reaſon was evidently wavering; and, no longer conſcious of the inutility of her exclamations, ſhe called inceſſantly for her child; then implored her huſband to pity her; and from thence her thoughts made a ſudden tranſition to the ſcenes ſhe had paſſed through in Sicily and at Formiſcuſa; till, at length, all ſhe ſaid appeared ſo incoherent, and was ſo little underſtood by thoſe who heard her, that they became convinced her ſenſes were totally deranged, and, that theſe wild and incoherent appeals to perſons, as well as her deſcriptive ravings about places, were the effects of a diſordered imagination.

Lady Llancarrick, who was writing for the ſtage, contemplated this ſad ſpectacle with the ſang froid of an amateur, who hoped to add ſome ſtrong touches to her performance; while her more gentle friend, with her attempts at ſhewing ſenſibility,

was conſidering how ſuch an incident might weave into a novel; but neither felt any true ſympathy for the unhappy object, who, in the early bloom of youth, was thus the prey of anguiſh, which was reducing her to inſanity or death.

The woman of the houſe, however, and the apothecary of the village, began, after the third and fourth day, to be ſeriouſly alarmed for the unfortunate patient, inſtead of recovering her recollection, continued to fluctuate between violent ravings and fits of gloomy ſtupidity, while an alarming fever continually preyed upon her.—The ladies, who had at firſt appeared to attend her with patience and humanity, now ſlackened in their good offices: Lady Llancarrick found that neither Walſingham nor Montalbert appeared; that ſhe had no chance of making an intereſting or profitable acquaintance by her affected humanity, and that ſhe might, perhaps, be involved in trouble, and even in expence; to both of which, but particularly the latter, ſhe had a decided averſion. As to

Miſs

Miſs Gillman, ſhe had no will of her own, but contented herſelf with gentle repetitions of the words, " Poor dear creature!—Sweet unfortunate!——alas! how pitiable!"——While ſhe occaſionally addreſſed to her patroneſs eulogiums on her benevolence—" How good your ladyſhip is!—oh! what a heart, my dear friend, is yours!—what amiable ſympathy for the diſtreſſed!"——Theſe ſentences were continually ſighed forth from the delicate ſenſibilities of the ſentimental Muſe, and received by the lady as if ſhe had really deſerved them.

Ah! little could the conſolations of ſuch people avail towards healing the wounds of a broken heart. The unfortunate Roſalie every day became worſe and worſe. Claudine could not act for her; a ſtranger herſelf, and naturally helpleſs, ſhe could only ſit and weep by the bedſide of her expiring miſtreſs; or, when ſhe appeared to have an interval of ſenſe, aſk directions of her, which Roſalie was unable to give,

or

or which, if given, were incoherent and impracticable.

The apothecary now conſulted Lady Llancarrick on the propriety of ſending for a phyſician. Uncertain how far the finances of the ſufferer might anſwer ſuch an expence, and fearful of being called upon herſelf to ſupply any deficiency, Lady Llancarrick would give no advice; the landlady doubted how far enough remained, in caſe her lodger died, to diſcharge the arrears that would be due, and to pay the expences which might be incurred; while Claudine, who had not the ſmalleſt idea of the mercenary principles on which theſe people acted, was continually imploring Lady Llancarrick to ſend for other advice, till, from this ſort of importunity, ſhe gradually withdrew; while Miſs Gillman gravely held forth an opinion, that, perhaps, after all, this pretty young creature, for whom they had been intereſting themſelves, and whoſe adventures appeared to have ſomething ſo extraordinary

traordinary in them, might be merely a girl in inferior life, to whom ſome man of faſhion had attached himſelf, and, finding her unworthy of any long or ſerious partiality, had taken his child from her for very proper reaſons. While theſe two good ladies were thus prudently ſettling that they ought to decline any farther interference, the illneſs of the wretched Roſalie increaſed to ſuch a degree, that the apothecary believed, and her female attendants were convinced, ſhe had not many hours to live.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXV.

FIVE days had now paſſed, five melancholy days, ſince the ſad victim of unjuſt ſuſpicion had found no relief from anguiſh, but in her moments of inſenſibility. Her lovely face was quite faded and changed; her form emaciated and enfeebled, ſo that ſhe could hardly ſupport herſelf in her bed; ſometimes ſhe wildly ſtarted up, looked round her, and inquired for her child, until ſome degree of recollection ſunk her again into the torpor of deſpair.

It was on the evening of the laſt of theſe days that three gentlemen, attended by ſervants, ſtopped in a poſt coach at the door of the houſe, and inquired for Mrs. Montalbert. The landlady, who hoped that their arrival would put an end

to

to her apprehenſions of pecuniary loſs, eagerly aſſured them that the lady was there; ſhe was very ill to be ſure—" But I will call Mam'ſelle, her maid, (added the good woman); and, for certain, Madam, will be glad to ſee her friends."

The three ſtrangers, on this information, left their coach, and entered the parlour. One of them appeared to ſuffer from ill health; he was pale and ſallow, and, though yet in the middle of life, ſeemed to have been the victim of ſorrow or diſeaſe. The ſecond had the habit and air of a clergyman; and the laſt was a young man, apparently of faſhion, who might have been taken for the ſon of the one, and the pupil of the other.

Claudine, who, amidſt all her ſolicitude for her miſtreſs, never loſt ſight of a little perſonal vanity, ſtaid to adjuſt her cap at the glaſs, to put a little powder in her hair, and a nicer fichu on her ſhoulders; and then expecting certainly to ſee Mr. Walſingham, whom ſhe conſidered, in ſome meaſure, as her maſter, ſhe fluttered down

down into the room, where, in his place, ſhe beheld three gentlemen who were entirely ſtrangers to her.

The elder of them began to queſtion her on the ſituation of her lady; but finding ſhe underſtood little Engliſh, the younger, who ſpoke like a native of France, took up the inquiry, and heard, with great apparent concern, the ſad account of Roſalie's health, which even the warmth and earneſtneſs of Claudine's manner could but little exaggerate. Each of her auditors ſeemed almoſt equally affected, and each inquired whether ſhe could conduct them to her miſtreſs. Claudine, not knowing what to do, and having no idea of who theſe people could be, anſwered, in viſible alarm, that ſhe would go and inquire; forgetting, at that moment, that her poor miſtreſs was probably incapable of attending to any queſtion ſhe might put to her, and certainly incapable of converſing with ſtrangers.

It was in vain ſhe ſpoke to Roſalie; ſhe attended not to her. At length Claudine

dine thought of a ſtratagem ſhe had before uſed with ſome ſucceſs, when it was neceſſary to rouſe her unhappy miſtreſs to temporary exertion—ſhe ſpoke of her child; and Roſalie, who had appeared totally inſenſible for ſome moments, raiſed her languid head on her arm, and fixing her dim eyes on Claudine, faintly bad her repeat what ſhe had been ſaying.

Claudine then told her, that three gentlemen were below, who, ſhe was ſure, were her friends, and who certainly came to tell her ſome good news about the dear little boy. Roſalie, catching eagerly at the hope theſe words offered, ſeemed to make an effort to recal her diſſipated and confuſed ſenſes to a point worthy her attention. Claudine ſaw that ſhe had gained her notice, and repeated all ſhe had ſaid, enforcing, with her utmoſt power, the idea that the three gentlemen in queſtion were certainly ſent by Montalbert to treat of a reconciliation, and reſtore her child.

Roſalie by degrees acquired ſo much power over her ſcattered and enfeebled ſpirits,

ſpirits, as to attempt recollecting what friends were moſt likely to be charged with ſuch a commiſſion; but her intellects were not equal to the reſearch; bewildered and confuſed, ſhe put her hand to her head, and ſighing deeply, ſhe appeared to give up the inquiry in deſpair. There were no friends of hers who anſwered the minute deſcription Claudine had given of the ſtrangers; nor did ſhe know of any friends of Montalbert's, who were either acquainted with his marriage, or likely to be in his confidenece. Hope, however, enabled her to re-aſſume her powers of reflection, and ſhe became conſcious, that, whoever the perſons might be who thus intereſted themſelves in her affairs, ſhe ought to ſee them, if they were Montalbert's friends, on his account; if they were her friends, on their own.

But when it was neceſſary to make the exertion, which her returning reaſon told her was neceſſary, her ſtrength ſo failed her, that it was more than an hour before

fore ſhe was ſeated, by the aſſiſtance of the landlady, in an arm chair, and half an hour longer before ſhe had, by the aid of hartſhorn and water, obtained reſolution enough to let Claudine go down with a meſſage, that any one of the gentlemen who were moſt diſpoſed to take the trouble of viſiting a ſick room, was deſired to walk up.

An interval of ſome moments paſſed before a foot was heard on the ſtairs; but Roſalie, ſo far from finding her courage ſtrengthened by the delay, had become almoſt ſenſeleſs and breathleſs, when the door was opened by Claudine, and the figure which appeared at it ſhe juſt diſtinguiſhed to be Charles Vyvian, before her ſight and conſciouſneſs totally forſook her, and ſhe fell back in the chair, towards which he eagerly flew to ſupport her.

" My ſiſter! (cried he)—my dear, dear Roſalie!—But is it, indeed, my Roſalie!—Good God! how changed!—how altered!——Where is Montalbert?—what has

has happened?—and why are you reduced to this ſituation?"

Roſalie heard him not; but Claudine, amidſt her efforts to recover her miſtreſs, related all ſhe knew. It appeared from the ſurprize Vyvian expreſſed, that, ſo far from knowing any reaſon for the conduct of Montalbert, he was not certain of his being in England, and that all the intelligence he had gained, as to the reſidence of Roſalie, came from Mrs. Leſſington.

Claudine, who ſaw her miſtreſs incapable of liſtening to this diſcourſe, renewed her lamentations; while Vyvian, eager and impatient, and not conſidering the conſequences, bade her call up the gentlemen below: an injunction which Claudine, as inconſiderate as himſelf, immediately obeyed.

Roſalie, therefore, hardly opened her eyes after ſo unexpected an appearance as that of Charles Vyvian, before they were ſtruck with the figure of William Leſſington, who, though greatly altered ſince ſhe

ſhe ſaw him laſt, ſhe immediately knew: but the ſuddenneſs of his appearance, the diſtreſs viſible in his countenance, and ſtill more in that of the ſtranger who ſtood by him, with clapſed hands, and an expreſſion of mingled terror, pity, and affection, ſilently gazing on her, amazed her ſo much, that ſhe was incapable of aſking either who he was, or why he ſeemed ſo intereſted in her fate?—She was incapable, indeed, of ſpeaking at all, but held out her hand to Mr. Leſſington, in a manner which forcibly expreſſed—" Oh! friend and guide of my youth! why have you ſo long deſerted your unhappy Roſalie?"

Leſſington now ſpoke to her.—" My deareſt friend! (ſaid he), my ſweet Roſalie, you are ill!—you are unhappy!"

" I am, indeed," ſhe would have anſwered, but ſhe could not articulate the words. Her attempt, however, had ſomething ſo affecting in it, that the ſtranger could no longer reſtrain the emotions which aroſe in his breaſt; he burſt into an agony of tears, and, turning from her, exclaimed—

"She too is deſtroyed—deſtroyed as her mother was, by the accurſed houſe of Montalbert!——Yes!—the nephew reſembles the uncle—he has murdered *my* daughter!"

Theſe ſtrange exclamations ſerved entirely to overcome the feeble ſpirits of Roſalie; ſhe no longer comprehended, and but indiſtinctly heard, what paſſed.—Leſſington hung over her with the tendereſt concern, while Vyvian walked about the room in great agitation; yet attempted to appeaſe that of the ſtranger, and now and then ſpoke a broken ſentence to Roſalie. It was evident, that far from relieving the ſweet ſufferer, for whom they were all intereſted, by a continuation of this ſcene, they did but increaſe her anguiſh, yet none of them had ſufficient preſence of mind to remark this; and there was no woman about her, who had ſenſe or obſervation enough, to adviſe them to withdraw till ſhe could acquire more compoſure.

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The agitation of the ſtranger became more violent. It was Ormſby, the unfortunate father of Roſalie, who, having returned with an ample fortune from India, had been informed, on his firſt inquiries, that Mrs. Vyvian was dead. From Mrs. Leſſington he had learned, that young Vyvian, her ſon, was, by a paper ſhe wrote to him before her death, acquainted with the real relationſhip in which Roſalie ſtood to him, and with the circumſtances that had rendered her marriage with his father a ſource of continual unhappineſs.

Charles Vyvian, who had always loved his mother much better than his father, whoſe ſole attachment to him originated in family pride, no ſooner knew this hiſtory, than, with every attention that delicacy and duty required towards the character and memory of his mother, he ſought, as ſoon as he returned to England, the family of Leſſington. The eldeſt ſon, who was ſettled near Oxford, was more eaſily applied to than any other part of it. To him, therefore, Vyvian addreſſed him-

ſelf, and thither alſo Mr. Ormſby was directed, when, on application to Mrs. Leſſington, he found ſhe was herſelf ſettled in the north. After an explanation between theſe gentlemen, they determined to ſeek Roſalie together; and ſet out for Eaſtbourne, without ſuſpecting that ſhe was ſuffering under any other unhappineſs than that which aroſe from a temporary ſeparation from her huſband; they arrived at Eaſtbourne, and found her emaciated by illneſs, injured in intellects by grief, and incapable of feeling that portion of happineſs and proſperity, which, they hoped, it would have been in their power to offer her.

Ormſby, from the moment he had learned that he had a daughter living, who was worthy, for her own ſake, of the tenderneſs he was diſpoſed to feel towards the repreſentative of the woman he adored, he cheriſhed the moſt flattering hopes of happineſs with a lovely being, who would recal continually to his mind the hours of his early felicity, and gild the evening of

his

his life. He now found all viſionary bliſs vaniſhed at once, and the bitterneſs of his diſappointment was aggravated, when he remembered that the blow, which had murdered his happineſs a ſecond time, came from the ſame family that had deſtroyed it before. The injuries, the deceptions, the tyranny, of Old Montalbert, which had driven him from the boſom of his firſt Roſalie to exile and to ſorrow, now ſeemed to be revived in the nephew to rob him of all he had left; and, in the anguiſh of heart, which theſe thoughts gave him, he forgot, that, by his unguarded tranſports, he was deepening the wounds he deplored. Such, however, were the unhappy effects of his expreſſions on the bewildered mind of his daughter, who catching from them ſome vague ideas about her mother, (whoſe name he often repeated), though unable to follow the chain of circumſtances to which theſe expreſſions alluded, that her ſpirits were entirely overcome; and, when he fondly called her his daughter, his only hope on earth,

his poor unfortunate child! ſhe was ſo far from underſtanding it was her father who ſpoke to her, that ſhe wildly fancied it was the ſame perſon who had been ſent by Montalbert to take her child from her. She ſhuddered, therefore, as he approached her; withdrew her hand from him, as he attempted to take it, and looking with wild and eager eyes towards Leſſington, who engaged her notice more than Vyvian, ſhe appeared ſilently to entreat that he would deliver her from the preſence of a perſon, of whom, was evident from her manner, ſhe had conceived ſome unfavourable impreſſion.

Shocked by this conviction, and aſſured that her intellects were entirely gone, the unhappy father haſtily left the room, and threw himſelf into a chair in the parlour below, where he gave way to the anguiſh of his ſoul.

The ſight of Roſalie, though ſhe reſembled her mother more by her air and voice than by any poſitive likeneſs of features, had brought to his mind a thou-

ſand

ſand tender recollections; and, in believing her irreparably hurt both in her underſtanding and conſtitution, he felt as if the wounds that had been ſo long healing, after his ſeparation from her mother, were now torn open afreſh; and the happineſs which he had fondly hoped might gild the evening of his life ſeemed now vaniſhed for ever.—Why Montalbert had left Roſalie; or why he had ſo cruelly taken her child from her, he could not imagine. Vyvian had learned theſe particulars from Claudine, and had unguardedly communicated them to the reſt; but as Claudine was herſelf ignorant of his motives, ſhe could only relate the facts, and Mr. Ormſby, never diſpoſed to think favourably of the family of Montalbert, could ſee nothing in ſuch actions but an hereditary depravity and malignity, which he execrated. It was not long before Vyvian joined him in the parlour. Ormſby ſaid little to him of the reſolution he was ſilently forming, while Vyvian, who was extremely hurt at the ſituation of Roſalie,

whom he had ever tenderly loved, believing it impoſſible that Montalbert could act, as he was repreſented to have done, without ſome very ſtrange miſunderſtanding, determined to ſet out immediately in queſt of him, and, repreſenting the ſituation of his wife, endeavour to develope the cauſe of his having thrown her into it by his raſh and unkind conduct.

Mr. Leſſington, in the mean time, was attempting to ſooth and appeaſe the troubled mind of his ever-beloved Roſalie, in hopes of learning and of alleviating her diſtreſs. He at length ſucceeded ſo far, as to procure from her the words "Yes!" or "No!" to ſome of the queſtions he put to her; but to others ſhe remained ſilent, or anſwered only by a deep ſigh. Finding he could gain, therefore, but little information, though he ſtaid with her near half an hour longer than the other two gentlemen, he left her, ſaying he would return to her immediately, and rejoined his diſtreſſed friends below.

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Some converſation there paſſed between them, in which the calmneſs of Mr. Leſſington was happily oppoſed to the agitation of a father oppreſſed with ſorrow, and the natural vivacity of Vyvian, who now felt diſpoſed to quarrel with his couſin, and now to account for conduct which ſeemed to him unpardonable, if ſome reaſon could not be given for it.

Leſſington, whoſe attachment to Roſalie had grown up with him, liſtened to each of them with patience, but acquieſced in neither of their plans. That of Mr. Ormſby, though he did not openly avow it, was to ſeek Montalbert, demand an explanation of his conduct, and, if he could not give ſome very good reaſon for meaſures ſo harſh and violent as he had adopted, to demand of him the ſatisfaction due to the injured honour and peace of the unfortunate Roſalie. Leſſington perfectly underſtood this by the half ſentences and angry expreſſions of Ormſby, and he ſaw the neceſſity of preventing a meaſure which muſt involve the object of his ſo-

licitude in yet deeper calamity. It was not eaſy, in the preſent agitated ſtate of his mind, to ſay any thing that would not rather irritate than ſooth, and, therefore, Leſſington affected to attend rather to the project of Vyvian, who propoſed ſetting out immediately to find Montalbert, and endeavour to clear up whatever miſtake had given riſe to proceedings ſo unlike the uſual tenor of his conduct.

Though Leſſington was clearly of opinion that Vyvian was not the propereſt perſon to engage in this explanation, yet, as he hoped to obtain Ormſby's patience while he was about it, and that ſomething might happen in the mean time to clear up the darkneſs in which they were involved, he ſeemed to agree to Vyvian's departure, ſtill, however, with coldneſs and reluctance, and as if he meditated on ſome ſcheme which he thought more eligible. At this inſtant Lady Llancarrick and Miſs Gillman appeared; the former having heard of the arrival of the ſtrangers, introduced herſelf to them as the dear friend

of

of Mrs. Sheffield, and, as ſuch, it ſeemed probable that ſhe could give them information as to the cauſe of the appearances which had ſo greatly diſtreſſed them. The change of name, which, though Mrs. Leſſington had mentioned it, had been hardly attended to before, now ſeemed to ſtrike Mr. Ormſby as if it were entirely new to him——Why ſhould his daughter have changed her name?—An appearance of concealment is always injurious. It might, however, be at the deſire of her huſband, ſince their marriage was clandeſtine. This reflection ſatisfied his mind for a moment as to that circumſtance, but, as Mr. Leſſington and Mr. Vyvian continued to converſe one with Lady Llancarrick and the other with Miſs Gillman, Mr. Ormſby, who liſtened to them alternately, found ſo many obſcure hints, or evaſive anſwers in their converſation, and thought them women whoſe acquaintance ſeemed ſo little creditable to his daughter, that his uneaſineſs became inſupportable.

He dreaded leſt in the conduct of Roſalie he ſhould find but too ſtrong a juſtification of that of Montalbert. This idea was infinitely more painful to him than to believe her innocent and ſuffering only from miſapprehenſion or injuſtice, and unable to bear the diſtreſs of mind, which every moment increaſed, he ſtarted up; and, leaving the room, walked up a lane near the houſe, which he traverſed with haſty and uncertain ſteps while the conference laſted, which had already given him ſo much uneaſineſs.

Before that conference ended, the conviction that both Leſſington and Vyvian had entertained of the perfect and unimpeachable diſcretion of Roſalie was cruelly ſhaken. They had learned from Lady Llancarrick, who either could not or would not conceal any thing ſhe knew, that, under a feigned name herſelf, and under the protection of a young man of the name of Walſingham, ſhe had appeared at the village, where ſhe had lived ſince in a retired

tired way, but frequently receiving him at her houſe, and, as it was generally underſtood, ſupported by him.

To two young men, who knew nothing of the extraordinary chain of events which had ſeparated Roſalie from Montalbert, (for Vyvian had paſſed eighteen months in the German Courts, from whence he had come to England only three months before this period), theſe circumſtances could not fail of having a very unfavourable appearance. Vyvian, as ſoon as the ladies from whom they had gathered this intelligence were gone, talked of ſeeking this Mr. Walſingham, and demanding an explanation of him; a ſcheme which appeared to Leſſington to be more pregnant with miſchief than even that propoſed by Ormſby. They now went in ſearch of the latter, and found him overwhelmed with ſorrow and anxiety. The ſtate in which his daughter was, gave him the moſt acute pain, which was infinitely increaſed by the dread he now entertained as to her conduct.—What Leſſington and Vyvian had to ſay, though

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the former ſoftened it all he could, was but ill calculated to appeaſe theſe fears; and a conflict now aroſe in the breaſt of the unhappy father, between his wiſh to return to, and, if poſſible, comfort his afflicted child, and his reluctance even to ſee her, if it could be true that ſhe had deſerted her huſband, and diſgraced herſelf.

He determined, however, once more to ſee her, and to ſee her alone. He found, on entering her apartment, that all the ſymptoms that ſeemed to have a little ſubſided, while ſhe had been flattered with hopes of hearing news of her child, had ſince returned with renewed violence; a deadly paleneſs overſpread her countenance, and a fever ſeemed to devour her. If Claudine ſpoke to her, ſhe anſwered only by a deep ſigh, and when ſhe became ſenſible that a ſtranger was in the room, and opening her eyes ſaw Ormſby, ſhe caſt a reproaching look towards Claudine, waved with her hand for him to leave her, and then, covering her face with her handkerchief, ſunk into ſilence, from which

not

not even the voice of Leſſington could rouſe her:—he, at the deſire of Mr. Ormſby, went to her, ſpoke to her, and entreated her to attend to her own health, to the anxiety of her friends; he even named her father to her, but he could obtain no other anſwer, than a faint entreaty that he would leave to her deſtiny a creature born only to be miſerable. At length, ſhe ſaid, "My father!—alas! *I* have no father!—Do not mock me! I never ſaw a father!—I had a huſband—indeed I had a child, but both are gone, and I am now a wretched outcaſt?"

"Have you not friends, Roſalie?—(Leſſington then ventured to ſay)—Surely there are ſome in whom you place confidence and friendſhip, though you deny it to him whom you once loved to call by the tender name of brother?"

To this it ſeemed as if ſhe was either unable or unwilling to anſwer directly; for again, with a deep-drawn ſigh, and in a half-ſtifled voice, ſhe ſaid, "You—you *are* my brother ſtill, William, if you do

not

not diſdain the title—and then I ſhall not be——as, indeed, I think myſelf now—quite—quite friendleſs!"

She was now again ſenſible, yet Leſſington doubted whether it was a proper hour to ſpeak to her of her father, ſince every time he had either ſpoken to her, or been named to her, her ideas ſeemed to have taken a confuſed flight, from whence it was not very eaſy to recal them; and though Mr. Ormſby earneſtly wiſhed ſhe might be made to underſtand that he was her father, yet Leſſington ſaw her mind ſo ſhaken by trying to impreſs on it what her mother had, he believed, never fully related to her, that he dreaded leſt ſuch an attempt now might be of the worſt conſequences.

All he judged prudent to do, therefore, was to ſooth her mind as much as he could for that night, and perſuade her father to leave her. This, though not without difficulty, he effected. Ormſby went again with him to the parlour, whither the landlady was now ſummoned to give information

tion where the beſt phyſician in the neighbourhood was to be obtained.

A meſſenger was diſpatched for one, but hardly was he gone, and Leſſington entering into converſation with his two friends on what he thought was propereſt to be done, when a ſervant on horſeback brought a letter, directed for Mrs. Sheffield, which, he ſaid, required an immediate anſwer.—On being queſtioned by Mr. Vyvian who it was from, the man anſwered inſolently enough, "That he had no orders to tell that, unleſs to the lady herſelf; but that, for his part, he was never aſhamed of his maſter's name—it came from Squire Walſingham."

Ormſby, who ſaw in the name of Walſingham, and in ſuch a correſpondence, a confirmation of all the fears that had aſſailed him for the reputation and peace of his daughter, determined to open this letter. Leſſington at firſt doubted how far this might be juſtifiable; but yielding at length to the authority of a father, the letter was opened, and, to the aſtoniſhment

and

and indignation of the parties, was found to contain theſe words———

" MADAM,

" A gentleman of the name of Montalbert has taken the trouble to write to me, on a ſuppoſition of my being a much more fortunate man than I have ever ſuſpected myſelf to be. He wiſhes me to meet him at my own time and place, to explain to him my pretenſions to the very great favours which he aſſures me you have honoured me with, as well in a certain long voyage, which it ſeems we made together, as ſince our return to England, where he affirms you have remained under my protection.

" Having hinted to him that I am perfectly unconſcious of all this, I have received a ſecond letter, couched in terms which do not generally paſs unnoticed between gentlemen. Now, Madam, if I muſt riſk the penalty, it is but juſt that I ſhould be made conſcious of the happy treſpaſs by which I have incurred it; when I am

I am perſuaded I ſhall meet with exultation whatever may happen; or if it hitherto exiſts only in the imagination of my correſpondent, I am, nevertheleſs, ready to meet him as he deſires, provided that before I become *his* adverſary, you will permit me to aſſume the pleaſing and honourable title of your champion.

" But, as no time is to be loſt, I await your anſwer with extreme impatience, flattering myſelf it will bring permiſſion to throw himſelf at your feet, one who is,

Dear Madam,

Your moſt devoted ſervant,

S. WALSINGHAM."

Vyvian had no ſooner heard the contents of this extraordinary billet, than he flew out of the room to find the ſervant that had brought it, for it appeared as if the writer of it was waiting ſomewhere in the neighbourhood, and he was at all events reſolved to find him.

Of Mr. Walſingham, neither Ormſby, Vyvian, nor Leſſington knew any thing but the

the name; and this letter, of whatever nature might have been his acquaintance with Roſalie, having certainly the air of an inſult, was not calculated to give them a favourable opinion of him. None of them could help ſeeing, that a meeting between him and Montalbert muſt be attended with fatal conſequences, if not to the life of either, at leaſt to the honour of the unfortunate young woman, who was the cauſe of their quarrel. Vyvian, breathing nothing but vengeance againſt a man capable of writing ſuch a letter, would liſten to nothing that Leſſington could ſay; and Ormſby, loſt in bewildering conjectures, but more uneaſy than ever, determined at length to purſue his original plan of finding Montalbert; and, having learned the cauſe of his conduct, and of the preſent extraordinary letter, to take Roſalie and conceal her in ſome obſcure retreat if ſhe was guilty; or, if ſhe was innocent, to vindicate that innocence in the face of the world. It was, however, neceſſary for him to await the arrival of the phyſician who

was

was ſent for, as it was certain the perſonal ſufferings of his unhappy daughter became every hour more alarming. Leſſington, with the moſt patient pity both for Ormſby and his child, remained with him; but his arguments had no longer any effect on the impetuoſity of Vyvian, who having learned, from the ſervant he had queſtioned, that Mr. Walſingham was at Brightelmſtone, ſet off thither in a poſt chaiſe, attended only by his ſervant, aſſuring his friends that he had no deſign of taking the reſentment of Montalbert out of his hands; but that he was determined to clear up this extraordinary buſineſs in ſome way or other, and that they ſhould hear of him in a very few hours.

With theſe aſſurances, ſince he would hear nothing Ormſby or Leſſington could ſay to urge remaining with them, they were compelled to ſuffer him to depart.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVI.

IT was already late in the evening, and Ormſby and Leſſington awaited in the moſt diſtreſſing ſuſpenſe the arrival of the phyſician they expected; the meſſenger ſent to him having returned, to ſay he would be with them as ſoon as poſſible. Roſalie, though ſtill conſcious of, and grateful for the attentions of Leſſington, ſeemed too ill to enter into converſation or explanation of any kind. But at length in attempting to ſooth and to reaſon with her, he prevailed upon her to ſay, that ſhe ſhould die contented, and even prefer death, if ſhe could but ſee her child once more, and aſk his father's protection for him. This was more than ſhe had yet coherently ſaid; and Leſſington, who was now alone by her bed-ſide, made an effort

to

to carry the converſation farther. "And why, my dear Roſalie," ſaid he, "why do you doubt his protecting his ſon? Since he has taken him from you, however unkind that ſtep may have been, as far as it regards you, Mr. Montalbert had probably no other deſign than to take care of him, and give him a father's protection."—"Good God!" exclaimed Roſalie, "can you, my dear Sir, believe that he could have been guilty of ſo very cruel an action, as tearing him from me, had he not determined to deſtroy me, and to eraſe all recollection of a marriage, which he probably repents, and is aſhamed of?—His mother, his cruel mother, and his treacherous friend Alozzi"—ſhe here pauſed a moment, unable to go on—"have prevailed on him to abandon me. Perhaps too, ſome newer attachment .... for I can never think that *they* alone could influence him—ſome newer attachment." She could proceed no farther; the idea was too cruel to be ſupported; and her voice

voice became inarticulate through the violence of her emotions.

Leſſington had never heard her ſpeak ſo much, and ſo conſiſtently before, and greatly as he ſaw ſhe was affected, he yet hoped that tears might rather relieve than injure her; he therefore ventured, after waiting a moment that ſhe might recover herſelf, to go on.

" Perhaps, my dear Roſalie, neither of theſe cauſes may have occaſioned the eſtrangement you deplore.—Perhaps, . . . forgive me if I ſeem to impute to you what you may be, and I believe are incapable of—but poſſibly ſome *unintentional* indiſcretion on your part may have been exaggerated and miſrepreſented.—Montalbert may have conceived himſelf injured by your conduct, and has raſhly treated you as culpable, without hearing your juſtification."

Roſalie pauſing a moment, as if to recollect her agitated ſpirits, raiſed herſelf on one arm, and with her other hand taking the hand of Leſſington, ſhe ſaid in a low

a low, yet ſolemn voice, "My dear brother! as there is truth in Heaven, I was never guilty of the ſlighteſt deviation from my duty, even in idea:—Montalbert muſt know my heart too well to ſuppoſe it.—I long doubted of his exiſtence; for you know how we were ſeparated.—Yet never, Oh! no never did my heart wander from its faith and affection to him!"

"I do believe you, my poor Roſalie," ſaid Leſſington, "I ſincerely believe you, though *how*, or even how long you were ſeparated, I am totally ignorant."

"I have papers that will explain it to you, my William, but I feel that it muſt be when I am no more; then Claudine ſhall deliver you a ſmall box, in which you will find a journal of my unhappy life, while I was able to keep a journal.—Yet a little, and I ſhall need no other juſtification to Montalbert.—When he finds that he has deſtroyed me, it is he, poor man, who will want conſolation—who will be an object of pity."

Roſalie ſpoke ſlowly, and with difficulty, and in a weak, faint voice; yet her anxious father, who had glided into the room, heard her diſtinctly; and as ſhe had never appeared to him ſo collected before, he was tremblingly ſolicitous for her to learn that he lived, and ſought only to protect her:—Like one who ſees his ſole treaſure half eſcaped from an abyſs, yet knows it is not quite in ſafety, and dreads to ſee it again ſnatched from his uncertain graſp. So Ormſby ſeemed loſt in the contrariety of emotions he felt: he ſoftly approached Leſſington, and in a whiſper beſought him to ſpeak to Roſalie of her father. But, however carefully he uttered this, his daughter heard ſome words, which as every thing now hurried and alarmed her, made her haſtily put aſide the curtain.

The amazement, not unmingled with ſome degree of apprehenſion, which ſhe expreſſed on ſeeing a ſtranger, was a proof how little ſhe remembered of what had paſſed before: Ormſby, unable to command his emotion, ſobbed aloud. As

ſtooping

ſtooping over her, he took her pale and emaciated hands; "Roſalie!" cried he, "dear repreſentative of the moſt beloved, and moſt injured of women—Speak to me —Speak to, and acknowledge your unhappy father!" The look with which ſhe regarded him alarmed Leſſington, who ſaid, "My dear Roſalie, your mother has left with Vyvian papers, in which it is declared, that before your marriage ſhe diſcovered to you the myſtery of your birth, and why it was that you paſſed as the child of my parents, while your own were concealed.—Recollect, my ſweet friend, all that your dear mother ſaid to you; and then you will at once underſtand how it is that your father, who very lately arrived from the Eaſt Indies, now haſtens to claim the only treaſure his fate has left him." All the particulars indeed that her mother had related at that moment returned to her mind: her heart acknowledged the dear tie that was now offered to it; ſhe raiſed her languid frame, and would have thrown herſelf into the arms of Ormſby,

but her ſtrength failed her—ſhe was only able to pronounce "My father," before ſhe ſunk down in the ſame ſtate of weakneſs which had often appeared ſo alarming—but before Ormſby or Leſſington could conjecture how they ſhould repair the imprudence they had thus been guilty of, the phyſician they expected arrived.

It was hardly poſſible that he could come at a more unfavourable time to judge of his patient: he found her indeed in a ſtate, which, as the reaſon of her violent and extraordinary emotion could not be entirely explained, gave him an opinion of her danger, even beyond the truth; and when he retired with her father and Mr. Leſſington, he expreſſed ſuch fears as to the event of her illneſs, that Ormſby, half frantic, could hardly be prevented from ſetting out for London immediately, and bringing down, at any expence, the moſt eminent phyſician, who could be prevailed upon to take the journey. Leſſington ſaw that this would anſwer no purpoſe, ſince if Roſalie was in ſo hazardous a ſtate, as

ſhe

ſhe was believed to be, it would be too late to expect relief from aſſiſtance that was to come ſo far. He thought it better to engage the gentleman now with them to remain all night, and to await the event of the morning; and this with ſome difficulty he accompliſhed.

The fever which preyed upon Roſalie, and which had originated ſolely in anguiſh of mind, increaſed during this miſerable night; but it ſeemed no longer to affect her intellects: amid variety of pain, her ſenſes were ſo clear, that ſhe repeated to Claudine what ſhe had ſaid relative to the box which was to be given to her friends. She told her too, that it was her father who was below, and that ſhe had never ſeen him before, but forbore any other explanation. Ormſby and Leſſington, who could neither of them ſleep, and who did not indeed attempt going to bed, had viſited her room ſeveral times during the night, and flattered themſelves from theſe ſymptoms that ſhe was amending: but when Dr. G. ſaw her at an early hour of

the morning, he thought her fever higher, and the whole houſe was in conſternation and deſpair.

It was towards noon—the phyſician was gone, having promiſed to return in the evening. Ormſby and Leſſington, as the ſuffering patient was apparently ſleeping, had walked out to relieve their fatigued and anxious ſpirits by the air, and having remained out about half an hour, they were met, juſt as they entered the houſe, by Claudine: who, with expreſſions of great joy in her countenance, told them, in her broken Engliſh, "That Mr. Walſingham was come; Le bon Walſingham, l'excellent Ami de ſa chere Maitreſſe;" for all that, and more his generoſity to her, had made him appear to Claudine. Claudine therefore was very much ſurpriſed and mortified to find, that the intelligence ſhe was eager to communicate was ſo far from giving pleaſure to either of the gentlemen, that they advanced towards the parlour, where ſhe had told them Mr. Walſingham was

was, with evident marks of anger in their countenance and manner.

The letter they had ſeen addreſſed to Roſalie, impreſſed them with the moſt unfavourable idea of the perſon they were going to meet: Ormſby, ſhocked at his arrival, which ſeemed a confirmation of fears in regard to the conduct of his daughter, which had been a while ſuſpended by fears for her health, was tempted to affront him even on the firſt moment of meeting him; and it was with difficulty he was diverted from this petulance by Leſſington, who ſaid, as they were entering the houſe, "I own I cannot ſee, my good Sir, what we ſhall gain by preventing an explanation from this young man, which he will certainly not give us, if we directly inſult him: whereas, if there is any miſtake in all this (as I cannot but believe there is), a little coolneſs may ſerve, if not to make us eaſy, at leaſt to produce ſuch an explanation as will direct our reſentment. Above all things, it ſeems to me neceſſary

to avoid every thing like violence in this ſmall houſe, if you would not endanger yet more the life of your daughter."

Ormſby felt the reaſonableneſs of this remonſtrance, and checked his own feelings as much as poſſible, though his countenance and air expreſſed them but too forcibly. If theſe gentlemen were aſtoniſhed at his appearance, after ſuch a letter as he had written, they were ſtill more ſo, to find him a young man of a very different appearance to what they had figured to themſelves the writer of ſo impertinent a letter muſt be.

Walſingham, unconſcious of any offence, and rather ſuppoſing he ſhould be received as the friend and protector of Roſalie, (for Claudine had explained who theſe gentlemen were) was immediately repulſed by the angry countenance of the elder gentleman, and the cold and diſtant bow of the other. He advanced, however, and in that graceful manner which his habitual dejection rather made more intereſting, he expreſſed the extreme concern

cern he felt at hearing of the indiſpoſition of Mrs. Montalbert. Yet how much ſatisfaction it gave him, (and he bowed to Ormſby as he ſpoke), to learn that ſhe was happy in the tender attentions of a father. "If you *know* me, Sir," ſaid Ormſby, "you ought to know and to feel, that your preſence here is an inſult which muſt deſerve the deepeſt reſentment of injured honour. Are you come, Sir, to overwhelm with ſhame my unfortunate daughter in her laſt hours? Are you come to triumph over a miſerable family, whom you have ruined in their fame, and in their happineſs?" All the paſſions of an injured father, combined in the boſom of Ormſby, who trembling, and for a moment deprived of breath, gave Walſingham (as he ſtood petrified by ſuch an addreſs), time to ſay—

"*Am* I come, Sir, with *this* deſign? am I come with *any* deſign injurious to the peace and honour of Mrs. Montalbert? Certainly not. You muſt greatly have miſtaken me, if you ſuppoſe it." Ormſby,

by a motion of his head and hand, expreſſed what he could not at that moment find words to utter: while Leſſington, taking advantage of this involuntary ſilence, ſaid, "After ſuch a letter, Sir, as that with which you have affronted Mrs. Montalbert, and, through her, all her family, all her friends, you muſt ſuppoſe....."

"A letter, Sir," interrupted Walſingham, "a letter from me? and inſulting Mrs. Montalbert? That is a charge which I own I am not prepared to anſwer. I have moſt certainly never written to Mrs. Montalbert ſince I had the honour of ſeeing her laſt."

Ormſby, naturally violent, yet ſubdued by time and trouble, was ſo overcome, that he had thrown himſelf half ſuffocated into a chair. Leſſington, more maſter of himſelf, continued to ſpeak for him.

"The letter, Sir, however, that we received, can admit of no excuſe: you have ſeen or heard of Mr. Montalbert?"

"Pardon

"Pardon me, Sir, I have done neither—I did not even know he was in England."

The countenance of Walſingham underwent a viſible change as he ſaid this; Leſſington failed not to remark it, but imputed it to emotions very different from thoſe that Walſingham felt while he continued to ſpeak.

"No, Sir, I did not even know Mr. Montalbert was come to England; but as it appears that he is, may I requeſt the favour of a direction to him? You will alſo oblige me by ſhewing me the letter, which I am ſuppoſed to have written to his wife, if ſhe is, as I fear, too ill to admit of my applying to her for it perſonally."

The emotion of Walſingham increaſed; he turned very pale, and his lips trembled.

"I have not got the letter," ſaid Ormſby, "nor has my daughter ever ſeen it; Mr. Vyvian has taken it with him to Brighthelmſtone, where your ſervant told us you were to be found, in order to demand an explanation."

"*My ſervant!*" exclaimed Walſingham, more and more ſurpriſed; "there is certainly ſome ſtrange miſtake in all this. Pray, Sir, with what name was it ſigned?" Leſſington then anſwering that it was "S. Walſingham." Walſingham began immediately to ſuſpect the truth; but when Leſſington explained to him the contents of this letter, and that they evidently alluded to a demand of ſatisfaction, which the writer of it had received from Montalbert; and when he alſo ſaid that Vyvian had left them the preceding evening in the full determination to have a meeting with Mr. Walſingham, all the miſchief which might happen between Montalbert, Vyvian, and his gay, faſhionable couſin (from whom he now eaſily underſtood the letter came), occurred in an inſtant to his mind. He ſaw that the death of one of them, perhaps of more, was likely to follow from the mere miſtake of a name. He ſaw the extreme concern which Roſalie might feel, if any evil ſhould happen even to a ſtranger, whoſe offence towards her was at leaſt palliated

hated by ignorance; but ſhould Montalbert or Vyvian be wounded, or fall, the conſequences to her muſt be ſtill more dreadful.

All this no ſooner ſtruck Walſingham, than he explained as clearly as he could the nature of his apprehenſions to Leſſington, who ſaw at once that they were too well grounded, for Walſingham deſcribed his relation as raſh, haughty, and violent; one who could be much more likely to retort any affront with intereſt, than to enquire the ground on which it was given. Ormſby and Leſſington were alſo well aſſured that Vyvian was irritable, proud, and impatient; and though neither of them were perſonally acquainted with Montalbert, they had no reaſon to believe, from all they had heard of him, that he was by any means of a calmer diſpoſition. A colluſion then between theſe three, or even any two of theſe fiery ſpirits, could hardly fail of producing ſome fatal event.

The generous mind and excellent heart of Walſingham were never more conſpicuous

cuous than at this moment. Without ſeeming to advert to the challenge, which it was certain Montalbert had ſent to his couſin, while intending it for him—without any menace, or even hint of his reſentment, he expreſſed nothing but a wiſh to go immediately in purſuit of the parties, and endeavour to prevent a meeting, from which ſo much was to be dreaded. It was not till after a ſevere ſtruggle, however, that he could determine to quit the houſe, not only without ſeeing Roſalie, but without enquiring after her health, or the circumſtances which had deprived her of it ſo ſuddenly. Claudine had told him enough to convince him that Montalbert had been actuated by jealouſy, and he ſuppoſed the object of that jealouſy was himſelf.—A thouſand painful thoughts crowded upon his heart—the huſband of Roſalie was returned:—No doubt, therefore, remained of his exiſtence; and it became more than ever prudent for the ill-ſtarred Walſingham to ſtifle the growing affection which muſt now be utterly hopeleſs.—

leſs.—But ſo much did that affection partake of his noble ſpirit, that the happineſs and the peace of Roſalie were infinitely dearer to him than his own, and he flew to ſave the huſband, whoſe life was between him and thoſe hopes which, in deſpite of reaſon, he had at times indulged.

If his taſk was in this reſpect painful, it was hardly leſs ſo in what related to Mr. Ormſby; though the matter of the letter was cleared up, he ſaw, that the father of Roſalie regarded him as one who had been the cauſe of Montalbert's eſtrangement from her; that long and diſagreeable explanations muſt take place, and that he could hardly hope to be received even as the friend of her to whom he felt ſuch painful partiality.—Ormſby, while he anxiouſly haſtened his departure, treated him with coolneſs, almoſt with incivility; but Leſſington, with milder manners, was more ready to believe that no blame could attach to the conduct of Roſalie in regard to him. Walſingham ſaw enough to give him great fears on her account; and with

a heart penetrated by ſorrow, he ſet out poſt to overtake Vyvian, and, if poſſible, meet Montalbert, who, from the ſubſtance of his relation's letter which Leſſington repeated to Walſingham, was, he concluded, either at Brighthelmſtone, or in its neighbourhood, waiting the rendezvous which he had demanded.

The wild indiſcretion of Claudine had communicated to her miſtreſs the arrival of Walſingham; and though her regard for him was as pure and innocent as that which ſhe felt for either of thoſe whom ſhe had learned to conſider as her brothers, yet ſhe ſuffered extremely when ſhe found he was gone, and had not ſeen her: not only becauſe ſhe was ſure it would give him pain, but becauſe it convinced her that the generous protection he had offered her had been the cauſe of his becoming ſuſpected by thoſe who ought to have felt the greateſt obligation towards him; and becauſe ſhe dreaded leſt he ſhould be involved in farther difficulties on her account.—She did not indeed know how

near

near he already was to the dangers ſhe apprehended for him.

Ill as Roſalie was, however, ſhe was not ſo enervated in mind as in body; and after hearing from Claudine an account of Walſingham's departure, and all ſhe had collected or fancied of the converſation while he ſtaid, ſhe ſummoned reſolution enough to determine upon putting into Leſſington's hands the account ſhe had kept of every event, from her arrival at Naples to the moment when ſhe ſo unexpectedly met with a friend and protector in Walſingham, and was delivered almoſt by a miracle from her hopeleſs confinement. During her voyages ſhe had alſo made memorandums of every occurrence, and ſince her reſidence at Eaſtbourne ſhe had returned to her journal, and related the events of her life, monotonous as they were, in the flattering hope that Montalbert might one day go over them, and that they might bear teſtimony to her unceaſing attachment to him, and to her duty.

In

In the effuſions of an ingenuous and unadulterated mind there is always a ſimplicity of character, which at once evinces the truth of whatever it relates. Though Roſalie thought not of that, ſhe yet felt, that if once Montalbert could be prevailed upon to read her narrative, all that had befallen her would be explained.—Shocked as ſhe was at his cruel conduct towards her, and deſpairing ever to ſee him more, ſhe had directed that theſe papers might not be delivered till after her death, which ſhe believed to be nearly approaching; but as from what Mr. Leſſington had ſaid to her, from the ſudden appearance of Walſingham, his departure without ſeeing her, and from all that Claudine had told her, of the manner and countenance of Mr. Ormſby, Roſalie had but too much reaſon to think the generous friendſhip of Walſingham towards her might endanger his life, ſhe rallied her feeble and fainting ſpirits to conſider how it was poſſible to avert the dreaded evil. She ſaw this could only be done by her putting into the hands

of

of Leſſington theſe proofs of Walſingham's diſintereſted friendſhip, and leaving him to act as ſhe knew his own prudence and ſenſe would dictate.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXXVII.

CLAUDINE went down by the direction of her miſtreſs, who requeſted to ſee Mr. Leſſington. On his entering the room, he found her raiſed in the bed by pillars; her countenance was very much changed for the worſe ſince he was with her laſt, and her pale hands trembled while ſhe ſorted ſome packets of papers tied with ribands, which ſhe took out of two boxes that were before her.

She looked at him, but did not ſpeak. It, therefore, immediately occurred to Leſſington, that Claudine had informed her of Walſingham's arrival and departure; and he felt confuſed and diſtreſſed, not knowing how he could avoid giving the ſorrowful information ſhe would ſeek.—Roſalie, on her part, not only feared to aſk

aſk any queſtions, but dreaded to hear what had paſſed—for ſhe was now poſſeſſed of recollection enough to advert to all that Leſſington had ſaid, and knew that Walſingham was an object of ſuſpicion to him and Mr. Ormſby: nor could ſhe doubt but that the conduct of her huſband had been occaſioned by the ſame miſtruſt.—The appearance, therefore, of Walſingham, muſt undoubtedly have deepened all theſe ill impreſſions, and Roſalie could not think upon them without the moſt acute pain, ſince it was but too probable that the generous and diſintereſted friendſhip of Walſingham had brought upon him treatment he little deſerved, and which ſhe thought him very unlikely to bear patiently. If theſe fears and conjectures were almoſt inſupportable, what would ſhe have ſuffered, had ſhe known how much of the evil ſhe apprehended was already realized; while Walſingham, unweared in generoſity, was more than ever entitled to her gratitude and regard.

Her

Her ſickened ſoul, where indeed reſted the cauſe of all her complaints, ſo far affected her enfeebled frame, that, when ſhe would have explained to Leſſington the nature of the papers ſhe put into his hands, by relating her ſituation at the various times on which they had been written, ſhe could hardly finiſh even a ſentence—but, putting the packets into his hands, ſhe faintly bade him read them in the order in which they were tied.—— "You, and my poor father, (ſaid ſhe, in a faint voice), will find that your unhappy Roſalie has done nothing which ought to make you aſhamed of the affection you have felt for her.... Vindicate my honour, William!—reſcue my memory from reproach!—and, for the ſake of my dear, dear boy, convince his father that I die innocent of all reproach, and that even in death I bleſs and love him."-------- She would have ſaid more, but put her hand to her forehead, and ſignified that ſhe could not.

Leſſington,

Leſſington, affected even to tears and ſobs, could not command himſelf ſufficiently to ſpeak. The ſight of his emotion added freſh pangs to what ſhe endured, when, waving her hand, ſhe ſeemed to entreat him to leave her, and he ſilently obeyed.

It was ſome time before he could recover himſelf enough to read aloud the melancholy narrative thus entruſted to him, to which Mr. Ormſby liſtened with anxious yet gloomy attention. When they had arrived at that part of the journal, written on board the ſhip which brought her to England, they ſaw far enough into her ſtory to be convinced that the meeting of Roſalie with Walſingham was entirely accidental; that ſhe could not have acted otherwiſe than ſhe did, and that the conduct of Walſingham had been that of the moſt generous and diſintereſted of friends: little, therefore, remained neceſſary for the entire vindication of both parties, but to remove the falſe impreſſions given by Lady Llancarrick and her friend, that they had reſided

reſided together at Eaſtbourne, which, though thoſe amiable ladies had not aſſerted, they had ſpoken of in ſuch a manner as to leave little doubt of the fact.

Jealous for the honour of his daughter, which her own artleſs narrative had nearly cleared, (ſo powerful is ſimple truth), Ormſby now preſſed eagerly to have all his remaining doubts ſatisfied. Though Claudine could not keep up a regular dialogue, ſhe could make herſelf underſtood when plain queſtions only were put to her. Ormſby, with that trembling apprehenſion which is felt by thoſe who dread the reſult of an inquiry which they are yet determined to make, called her into the room, and, with the aſſiſtance of Leſſington, had already convinced himſelf, that Mr. Walſingham had acted with the utmoſt delicacy and propriety in regard to Roſalie, when a poſt chaiſe and four, the horſes extremely fatigued, drove up to the door, and a gentleman, unknown to both Ormſby and Leſſington, entered the room.

Pale,

Pale, his hair in diſorder, his eyes wild, and his whole perſon expreſſive of haſte and diſtreſs, he uttered ſomething, in a manner ſo incoherent, that neither of them underſtood him. He ſaw they did not; and, throwing himſelf into a chair, he ſaid, "I ſuppoſe I ſpeak to Mr. Ormſby and Mr. Leſſington.....I imagine, Sir, (addreſſing himſelf to the former)—I imagine your daughter is here?"

Ormſby, alarmed and amazed, hesitated a moment, hardly knowing what to ſay. The ſtranger, without waiting for his anſwer, continued to ſpeak———

"I know not whether you ſee before you the moſt injured, or the moſt guilty, of men——I only know that I am the moſt wretched!"

"It is Mr. Montalbert, I believe, to whom I ſpeak! (ſaid Leſſington).—It is long, very long, ſince I ſaw you laſt, Sir—and I fear-------"

"You fear, and with but too much reaſon, (ſaid Montalbert, interrupting him), that our meeting now can only be pro-

ductive of pain.....Vyvian has told me--------"

"You have ſeen Vyvian then?" inquired Leſſington.

"I ſaw him, but not till it was too late. He is gone in ſearch of another man of the ſame name as him whom *I* moſt unfortunately met—and-------"

"Good God! (exclaimed Ormſby)—you have met then with that Walſingham, to whom Roſalie owes her ſafety, perhaps her life, and you have had the cruelty, the raſhneſs--------"

"To kill him!" cried Montalbert with fierceneſs, and in a tone that re-echoed through the houſe.

Claudine, on the firſt appearance of Montalbert, whom ſhe had never ſeen before, had liſtened at the door of the room, which was left half open; ſhe heard this terrible ſpeech, and, ſhrieking aloud, ran up ſtairs, but before ſhe reached the door of her lady's room, ſhe fell down in a ſort of fit, ſobbing and ſcreaming aloud. This was not wanting to terrify the unhappy

happy Roſalie; for tremblingly alive to every alarm ſince her child had been torn from her, there was ſeldom any thing paſſed in the houſe to which ſhe did not liſten. She heard the ſtopping of a carriage, the entrance of a perſon into the parlour, and ſoon after the voice of Montalbert, uttering the dreadful ſentence—"I have killed him!"—ſtruck her ears; then the ſhrieks of Claudine, who ſeemed to be immediately at her door—deſperation lent her ſtrength.

She had on a looſe dreſſing gown, when throwing herſelf out of the bed, and holding by the furniture, for ſhe was unable to move without ſuch help, ſhe reached the door of her apartment. Claudine weak, and at that moment incapable of exerciſing the very little judgement ſhe ever poſſeſſed, continued to intercept the way, having thrown herſelf down on the ſtairs. Roſalie, leaning againſt the door-caſe, attempted, but in vain, to obtain an anſwer; and her increaſing terrors threatened every inſtant to deprive her of the

little ſtrength ſhe had thus collected, when Leſſington, aware of the ſad effect that ſuch a noiſe in the houſe muſt have, ſuddenly quitted Montalbert, without ſtaying to hear all he had to relate, and haſtened up ſtairs, in hopes of appeaſing the fooliſh maid, and accounting to Roſalie for the alarm in ſome way which might not deſtroy her at once; to his utter aſtoniſhment he found her out of her bed, looking more dead than alive, and juſt ſinking to the ground as he ſprang forward, and caught her in his arms, then carrying her into her room, he placed her in a chair, and rang for aſſiſtance, for he believed her dying, and forgot, in that moment, every thing elſe.

The conſequence of his violence, however, was, that the father and huſband of Roſalie ruſhed alſo into the room, where Leſſington, ſupporting her head, and chafing her hands, continued to implore that aſſiſtance which none had the preſence of mind to give. Some perſon, however, had by this time fetched the apothecary,

and

and the uſual remedies being adminiſtered, Roſalie ſeemed to be recovering. It was then, at the earneſt entreaties of Leſſington, that Montalbert and Ormſby were prevailed upon to go out of the room, and Leſſington ſoon after followed them, declaring that his ſiſter (for ſo he always called her) was much better, and, if left to the women for a little while, would ſoon be entirely recovered. It was, however, eaſy to ſee he did not think ſo; for, incapable of following advice he was ſo ſolicitous to give, he could not forbear liſtening at the door, going half-way up the ſtairs, and ſhewing many ſymptoms of extreme inquietude. He dreaded, indeed, even the reſtoration of Roſalie's ſenſes, when he was aſſured ſhe would immediately aſk queſtions; to which the folly of Claudine, or the matter of fact of the woman of the houſe, would give anſwers that might occaſion the moſt dangerous relapſe. Theſe uneaſy apprehenſions were not appeaſed by the appearance of the apothecary, who expreſſed himſelf under the

greateſt alarm for the event, entreated that the lady might be kept quiet, and that the next viſit of the phyſician might be haſtened.—Montalbert heard all this in a ſtate of mind it is impoſſible to deſcribe. He knew, indeed, that Roſalie was ill from the report of Vyvian; but he knew not how ill, having ſeen him only for a moment.

Now all her danger appeared to him with redoubled terrors. From the little explanation, which his paſſion would admit of during his ſhort and unfortunate interview with Walſingham, he began to doubt whether he had not been guilty at once of ingratitude and cruelty, and whether he ſhould not now be puniſhed with eternal remorſe, as well as by loſing Roſalie for ever. Still ardent and impetuous, he inquired why he could not go or ſend for the phyſician inſtantly—then not liſtening to any reaſons that were given him, why it would be ineffectual, he ſtarted up, demanded of Mr. Greenwood, the apothecary, his poſitive opinion as to the ſtate

of

of the lady above ſtairs, and inſiſted upon being allowed himſelf to ſee her. Againſt this, however, Leſſington remonſtrated warmly, and Ormſby even angrily; while Mr. Greenwood proteſted to him, that, if ſhe was ſubjected to any farther alarms, he would not anſwer for her life till morning. He ſaid that he had already been compelled to quiet her harraſſed ſpirits by a medicine for that purpoſe; and if its effects were counteracted, ſuch was the weakneſs of her frame, and ſuch the nature of the fever which continually ſeized her, that the moſt fatal effects would very probably follow; he then took his leave.

Montalbert threw himſelf into a chair, and gave himſelf up to the moſt dreadful apprehenſions. Ormſby walked about the room in a ſtate but little better, while Leſſington, ever uſeful and compoſed, aſcended ſoftly to the chamber of the poor patient, whom he found ſometimes uttering a few incoherent words in a low voice, then, with a deep ſigh, ſinking into ſilence. At length ſhe ſeemed to become quite

tranquil; and Leſſington having inſiſted on Claudine's leaving the room, and engaged the woman of the houſe, with one of her maids, to remain there, returned himſelf to Ormſby and Montalbert, whom he was not very willing to leave long together.

The inſtant his immediate fears for Roſalie ſubſided, the idea that Montalbert had deſtroyed the unfortunate Walſingham recurred to the mind of Leſſington. He ſhuddered, and, at once pitying and condemning him, recollected that his perſon was not ſafe; and if the event of his meeting with Walſingham had been as fatal as he repreſented it, he ought to haſten from a country where he was liable to be ſeized as a murderer.

Montalbert ſat immoveable; he ſeemed regardleſs of any danger that might threaten himſelf, but liſtened to every noiſe in the houſe; and if he fancied any one ſtirred in Roſalie's chamber, he ſtarted, and eagerly aſked Leſſington if he thought ſhe was awake and ſenſible?

Ormſby,

Ormſby, overcome with fatigue and anxiety, had now been perſuaded to retire, and Leſſington remained alone with Montalbert.

It appeared to the former to be abſolutely neceſſary that Montalbert ſhould be reminded of his danger, or at leaſt that its extent might be known; taking occaſion then when he made ſome ſudden inquiry about his wife, Leſſington ſaid, "Allow me to remark to you, Mr. Montalbert, that your real tenderneſs for our poor unfortunate Roſalie, of whoſe innocence I am ſure you will one day be perfectly convinced, cannot be ſo well ſhewn as by your recovering your preſence of mind in the preſent ſad conjuncture; and if the fatal event has happened, which you ſpoke of when you firſt arrived, you ſurely ought to think of your own ſafety, on which, I am ſure, the life of Roſalie muſt depend."

"Walſingham was not dead when I left him, (anſwered he mournfully); but I fear his wounds are mortal!"

"Good God! (exclaimed Leſſington); and you remain here regardleſs of the event?"

"Quite ſo, (replied he), as far as relates to myſelf.—What have I left, that ſhould make me wiſh to preſerve my life?"

"Pray, (interrupted Leſſington, who feared from his manner that he might relapſe into violence)—pray relate to me what has paſſed ſince you were ſeparated from my ſiſter?"

Montalbert put his hand to his head, as if almoſt unable to undertake the painful taſk; but Leſſington, who had many reaſons for wiſhing to engage him in it, urging him again, he ſaid——

"I conclude you know the circumſtances that ſo ſtrangely divided me from Roſalie.—I was returning to rejoin her, in Sicily; having left my mother ſo extremely diſpleaſed at my poſitive refuſal to marry the lady ſhe had choſen for me, that I intended merely to conſult my wife before I declared our marriage, determining

to

to return to England, and to live in the humble and obſcure way our fortune demanded, till I became poſſeſſed of the property, however ſmall, that muſt be mine after my mother's deceaſe.

"There were reaſons that rendered our reſidence in Sicily unpleaſant to me, even when we were together; the frequent abſences, which our fear of my mother's diſpleaſure had obliged me to ſubmit to, became daily more inſupportable, and I was forming ſchemes of retired happineſs when I had thrown off this cruel reſtraint, and dared to be poor and independent. Judge then how horrible were my feelings, when, awaking from this dream of felicity, I found Meſſina in ruins, and the country for many miles around it convulſed by an earthquake, which had, two days before we made the coaſt, buried half its inhabitants.

"I cannot tell you what were my ſenſations after I had with much difficulty landed, for I have never ſince been able to define them; nor do I know from whence

ſprang the reſolution with which I explored the place where the villa of Alozzi had ſtood, of which no other veſtige remained than ſome pieces of black and half-burnt ruins: yet I looked with tearleſs eyes into the dark chaſms in which it was ſunk, though I thought they but too ſurely contained all I had loved—my Roſalie and her child!

"The firſt evening that I arrived at this melancholy ſpot, where I had ſo lately left the lovely treaſures of my heart in apparent ſafety, there was none near it—I was undiſturbed in my gloomy contemplation, and remained lingering about the place, till my ſervant, who had followed me at a diſtance according to my direction, came to me at night fall, and led me to a cottage not far off, inhabited by a woman and her daughter, who had loſt the reſt of their family. Of theſe my ſervant made ſome inquiries, as they were tenants of Count Alozzi. He heard that the Count was ſeen after the firſt great ſhock, and had hired a veſſel to take himſelf and ſome of

of his dependants to Naples; but whether he eſcaped the ſecond, or whether he was drowned with many others on the ſudden reflux of the ſea, theſe women had no means of knowing.—Here then was a glimpſe, and but a glimpſe of hope, that my wife and child might exiſt; but, on farther inquiry the next evening, I thought even this faint hope vaniſhed. I knew that when I left Sicily, Alozzi was gone to Agrigentum, and was to ſtay there ſome time longer than I propoſed remaining at Naples. It was not now, however, a time to conſider much the cauſe of his unexpected return. All my thoughts were bent on trying to recover from the ruins of his villa the ſad remains of my loſt family; and with this dreary ſort of ſatisfaction I occupied my mind, repairing the next day to the place, where I found three or four ſtout peaſants already at work.

"I inquired of them by whom they were employed?—they anſwered, in no very mild manner, by themſelves, and for their own purpoſes and profit. I ſaw that they

they feared I was diſpoſed, if not authoriſed, to impede their deſigns; but by the moſt infallible of all arguments, (for I emptied my purſe), and ſoon ſatisfied them that they ſhould not be interrupted in the poſſeſſion of whatever valuable effects they might recover, ſince my ſole purpoſe was to ſearch for the mangled relics of a wife and child. I offered them more money if they would procure farther aſſiſtance to expedite this ſearch, and, explaining to them who I was, promiſed farther reward if they could procure me any certain intelligence of Count Alozzi. They agreed that he had been ſeen after the firſt violent concuſſion of the earth; but all believed, or affected to believe, he periſhed in the ſecond.

"It was now nine days ſince the fatal cataſtrophe, three of which I ſtood by the yawning cavern that had ſwallowed the villa of Alozzi. Little was diſcovered by the men who went down among the ruins; they were, indeed, more intent on their own purpoſes than on mine. On the

the evening of the third day I went down myſelf, and I thought that by the remains of wainſcoting, or furniture, I ſhould be led to the ruins of that part of the houſe Roſalie had inhabited. Deſperate, I tore away, at ſome riſk to myſelf, the door-caſes, broken or ſcorched pieces of building, and at length found the room where Roſalie uſually ſat. I could clearly diſtinguiſh that there were no remains of human bodies in it; two only had been found, and they were known to be ſervants; but though another day's ſearch ſatisfied that no more perſons were buried in theſe ruins, yet even this circumſtance afforded no proof, that thoſe my ſickening ſoul inquired after were living.

" With an anxious and hopeleſs heart I left the peaſants buſily employed in labour, which had already amply repaid them, and now ſat out to wander over the country, aſking queſtions of the unhappy perſons who were yet ſcattered about it, though their anſwers only irritated my miſery, or confirmed my deſpair.

Moſt

Moſt of them were too much occupied by the wants and woes of their own condition, to give much attention to me. After ſome days were thus vainly waſted, I croſſed over to the other ſide of the iſland, and went among ſuch relations and friends of Alozzi as had eſcaped any immediate ſhare of the misfortune by being at a diſtance from that part where its violence had fallen. Among them I learned that Alozzi had quitted Agrigentum four or five days before the earthquake, and had gone, as they believed, to Meſſina, where they had no doubt of his having periſhed, as they had never heard of him ſince. There was hardly one of thoſe families who had not ſome relation or friend to lament; and I only quitted one houſe of mourning to enter another.

To me, all appeared equally deſolate and wretched; the image of my loſt happineſs continually haunted me, and I returned more unhappy than ever to the place where once ſtood the villa of Alozzi.

" By this time ſome peaſants who had been diſperſed, had come back to that neighbourhood alſo; among them I met two or three Sbirri, who were, I thought, likely perſons to have ſeen Alozzi, if he had indeed eſcaped, for they were daring and active, and were probably buſy wherever pay or plunder were likely to be had from the rich that ſurvived the earthquake. I entered into converſation with them, and heard that they had paſſed the night, after the firſt violent ſhock, at a houſe belonging to the Count, where they had ſeen him with a lady and her child, and a Neapolitan ſervant. That they knew the lady was an Heretic from the woman of the houſe, who, as well as thoſe to whom ſhe had given ſhelter during the horrors of that night, had expreſſed their fears of remaining under the ſame roof with a perſon of that deſcription, and that ſome of the women had actually left it, leſt ſhe ſhould draw Divine vengeance on the houſe.

This aſcertained, beyond a doubt, that it was my wife who accompanied Alozzi, I now

my wife with his maſter. A thouſand fears, and of various ſorts, now aſſailed me. I trembled at once for my Roſalie's ſafety, and even for her fidelity, if ſhe lived. ..... All the ſymptoms which I thought I had formerly remarked of Alozzi's admiration, if not attachment, recurred to me: he had not brought her to his own houſe publicly as the wife of his friend, whom he had aſſiſted to eſcape from deſtruction. This indeed might be accounted for by my ſituation in regard to my mother; but why was ſhe ſo carefully concealed from old and confidential ſervants? I cloſely queſtioned them all, and could not diſcover that one of them had the leaſt knowledge of the Count's having reſcued my wife and child. They all declared themſelves equally ignorant whither he was gone; he had taken only his valet with him. On farther minute inquiry, however, I diſcovered that, for two or three days before his departure, he had appeared very uneaſy and reſtleſs; was frequently ſhut up with his own man for a conſidera-

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ble time after he had been running about on buſineſs, which, though it was a profound ſecret, ſeemed by his manner to be of great importance. I paſſed a whole day in theſe examinations, and, in attempting to trace the road Alozzi had taken, determined to follow and overtake him. I found that he was gone towards Florence, and thither I impatiently haſtened.

"I arrived at the houſe, whither I with difficulty had followed his track, the very moment he was ſtepping into his carriage, about which his baggage announced his being on a journey; when I advanced and ſpoke to him—he changed colour, heſitated, and trembled; I begged of him to go back with me for a moment, and, without farther preface, aſked him what was become of my wife?

'What is become of her, Montalbert! (ſaid he, ſtill more agitated);—Do *you* know nothing of her?'

'I know

'I know (ſaid I) that ſhe left Sicily with you—that you have ſince concealed her ſomewhere.'

'I hope (added he, in a haſty and faltering voice) that you alſo know, then, for which of your Engliſh friends ſhe choſe to quit ſuch protection as I was able to offer her, and in which ſhe might undoubtedly have remained ſafe till your return.'-------

'My Engliſh friends! (cried I)—what Engliſh friends?—How could ſhe meet them?—and-------'

"But I ſhould never conclude what I have to relate to you, Mr. Leſſington, were I to repeat the long diſcourſe that paſſed. Alozzi told me a very plauſible ſtory of his ſudden return to Meſſina; of his having ſought and ſaved Roſalie and her child; and of his having afterwards placed her in a retired lodging, where, after a ſtay of near a month, during which he had done every thing in his power to

tranquillize

tranquillize and ſooth her with the hopes of my return, ſhe became extremely diſcontented; inſiſted on his trying to intereſt for her ſome Engliſhman at Naples, with whom ſhe might return to her own country; 'and, on my refuſing to do ſo, (ſaid Alozzi), ſhe attempted, as I found afterwards, to bribe the ſervants I had placed about her, to deliver letters for her to any Engliſh gentlemen they could hear of. Theſe people have proteſted to me, that they reſiſted every attempt ſhe made to engage them in this reſearch:—nor could I ever diſcover by what means Mrs. Montalbert contrived to find the perſon with whom ſhe concerted her meaſures ſo well, as to eſcape during the night, and to leave no trace by which I have ſince been able to diſcover whither ſhe is gone; though I have hardly ſlept ſince, my dear friend, ſo anxious have I been to recover, if poſſible, this lovely miſguided wanderer, and to reſtore her to you, as a precious depoſit of which I was not an unworthy guardian!'

'I then

"I then inquired of Alozzi, if he had come to Florence on any hope of finding her there. He told me he had, but that all his inquiries being baffled, he was departing for Rome, ſtill on the ſame ſearch. This was not enough for me; I inſiſted on his particularizing the reaſons he had to believe my wife had gone to Florence; this he appeared ready to do, and I thought them ſo plauſible, that I reſolved to go among my countrymen, who were then numerous at Florence, in hopes of learning ſomething of my poor fugitive. This inquiry, which detained me a great while, and which it was extremely painful to make on ſo delicate a ſubject, ended only in convincing me that ſhe was not at Florence; and though, from repeated converſations with Alozzi, I was far from being ſatisfied that Roſalie had not very different reaſons for withdrawing herſelf from his protection, than thoſe he had given, yet her impatience to be in England, or among perſons of her own country, if not a partiality to ſome individual

of

of it, made me only waver between doubt and deſpair, and happineſs ſeemed certainly fled for ever."

Montalbert appeared ſo exhauſted, that Leſſington intreated him to take ſome refreſhment; after which, all remaining quiet in the houſe, he thus continued his narrative.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

"WHITHER was I now to go in ſearch of Roſalie? miſtruſting as I did Alozzi, and doubting when he affected to be moſt buſy in the purſuit, whether he had not himſelf concealed her. I determined, however, not to part with him—if his intentions were honeſt, he might aſſiſt me in my ſearch; if not, I ſhould at leaſt have the chance of detecting him, by his endeavours to evade me, or by ſome of thoſe overſights by which the moſt artful men often betray themſelves.

"I therefore accompanied Alozzi to Rome, where we made acquaintance with every Engliſhman, and endeavoured to diſcover from them the names of their countrymen who had within a few weeks left Rome for England, or any part of Italy;

Italy; and in ſhort made ſuch enquiries as might lead to the object of our painful reſearch. We gained, however, no ſatisfaction till at the end of a fortnight, when Alozzi came to tell me, he had met a *valet de place*, who had been accuſtomed to live much with the Engliſh at Rome; Alozzi ſaid, the man was remarkably intelligent; that he had entered into diſcourſe with him, and found that about three weeks before he had ſerved (though for a few days only) an Engliſhman of the name of Walſingham, who came from Naples, attended by a young lady with whom this man believed he had eloped; for that his conduct while at Rome ſeemed calculated to baffle purſuit and enquiry, and that after a ſhort time they departed very myſteriouſly, but he had good reaſons to believe they went to Genoa, there to embark for England. Alozzi brought the man to me; I queſtioned him, and from his deſcription I ſoon thought that Roſalie was the lady whom he had ſeen with Mr. Walſingham. I heard with anguiſh not

to be expreſſed that ſhe was gay in ſpirits, and accompanied this Walſingham evidently by her own conſent. She had no child with her; but if ſhe had ſo far forgotten the father, as to follow another, ſhe would have found no difficulty in abandoning her child.—The longer I talked with this man, the more clearly the fatal conviction flaſhed upon me.—The time anſwered exactly to that on which Roſalie left the houſe where Alozzi had placed her: the character of Walſingham was that of a man of boundleſs expence, and unreſtrained libertiniſm; all ſerved to perſuade my ſenſes that he had ſtolen from me the perſon and the affections of Roſalie.—Indignation and rage now animated a purſuit, which had before been prompted by tenderneſs and hope. With whatever reſentment I thought of the infidelity of my wife, my heart turned with fondneſs towards my child, thus abandoned, as I imagined, to the mercy of ſtrangers, yet I knew not where to ſeek him; and the deſire of vengeance was even ſtronger than

than parental affection. After ſome conſultation with Alozzi, it was agreed that he ſhould return to Naples, where, by offering rewards, he had no doubt but he ſhould diſcover my ſon, of whom he proteſted he would take a father's care, and ſend him to me by ſome truſty perſon, whitherſoever I ſhould direct. Alozzi departed, and I made the beſt of my way to Genoa; thither I traced perſons reſembling thoſe I purſued, and on ſearching the regiſters kept at the *Dogana*, of people departing from that port, I found that about a fortnight before my arrival, Mr. Walſingham, an Engliſhman, with his lady and two ſervants, had embarked for England.

"I had now no doubts remaining—Roſalie paſſed for the wife of Walſingham, and as ſuch was proceeding to her native country.

"Stung even to temporary madneſs, I adopted the ſudden reſolution of writing to my mother, reproaching her with the miſery ſhe had been the cauſe of, by com-

pelling me to take meaſures which had torn from me the woman I adored, and with her all the happineſs of my life; I told her that to make me any amends was impoſſible; that I ſhould never ſee her more; but that if ſhe were not totally loſt to every feeling of humanity, I implored her to receive and protect my child, whom, by a letter written at the ſame time to Alozzi, I deſired him to ſend to her. I hoped that even her bitter and inveterate prejudices might give way to pity and concern, when *I* could no longer offend her, and when ſhe ſaw in a lovely and innocent infant the repreſentative of a ſon whom ſhe had driven to deſpair.

"Having done this, I gave myſelf up wholly to that thirſt of vengeance which devoured me, and took my paſſage to England in the firſt ſhip I could meet with, but for which I had the mortification of waiting a conſiderable time.

"Every perverſe accident, to which a traveller by ſea is ſubject, conſpired to retard my paſſage. The ſhip was old, and a bad

a bad failer; the captain had not enough men to work it, and of the few he had, two were confined to their hammocks by an infectious fever. We were continually beaten back by contrary winds, and the mortality increaſed in our little crew ſo much, that when we came into the Strait, I inſiſted upon being put on ſhore at Gibraltar, where, having taken the fever, I became extremely ill, and, after a confinement of near a month, narrowly eſcaped with my life. This cruel delay over, I once more embarked in a ſloop of war, and was at length landed at Plymouth. In London I could not fail to hear of Mr. Walſingham, for there a man of his fortune muſt be known. I obtained a direction to his houſe in Groſvenor Street, where I heard that he was juſt gone to Brighthelmſtone. I could no longer entertain a ſingle doubt of my being right as to the perſon, for on enquiry of his ſervants I heard, that he was, a few weeks ſince, returned from a tour to Italy.

I haſtened, therefore, to Brighthelmſtone, and to a houſe taken for the ſeaſon by this Mr. Walſingham; I heard he was gone on a ſailing party to Portſmouth and the Iſle of Wight, but was expected back in a few days: his character anſwered to all I had heard of him abroad. Afraid of miſſing if I attempted to follow him, I reſolved to await his return; but ſleep forſook my pillow, and I wandered about from the dawn of the day, till the lateſt hour of night, without any other purpoſe than to wear away the tedious time that prevented my doing myſelf juſtice. It happened that I was ſitting at a very early hour of the morning in one of the public libraries, where two of thoſe *bon vivans* were alſo ſitting, who regularly make tours during the ſummer months round the coaſt, to repair the exceſſes of their winter. I ſat penſively ſilent, thinking on ſubjects, how different; when theſe two good cits began a diſcourſe on the various advantages or diſadvantages of different bathing places: one related to the other, that

that he had lately left Eaſtbourne; where, ſaid he, 'I got poultry pretty reaſonable, and the wheat-ears were beginning to flock. There was not, indeed, much company; but then there were people that cared not what they gave for any thing; there was the famous Lady Llancarrick, and a Miſs Something, one of your book-making ladies, with her. To be ſure I thought it a little oddiſh to ſee her Ladyſhip quite hand and glove not only with that Miſs What-d'ye-call'um, but with another young creature, who goes, you muſt know, by the name of Sheffield, but as the people there ſay, is the miſtreſs of one Mr. Walſingham, a man of great fortune, who brought her from abroad.—My ſon Jack, who came down to me from Friday to Tueſday, and is a mighty chap for a pretty face, fell downright in love with this fine madam—though, to do her juſtice, ſhe looks very modeſt for one of that ſort; and egad, Sir, it was as much as I could do to keep him from making up to her.—Why,

Jack, (ſays I), don't you ſee ſhe is countenanced by Lady Llancarrick. He laughed, and ſaid, the lady herſelf was no better than ſhe ſhould be, and he'd make love to them all three."

"Imagine, Mr. Leſſington, what I felt at hearing this converſation.—I knew not what I ſaid to the man, but he told me, with many bows, and ſome gaſping grimaces, all he knew; among other particulars, that the lady had a child with her; and then they both walked away, probably much amazed at my inquiſitiveneſs and violence; while liſtening to nothing but my rage and indignation, I ordered a poſt-chaiſe, and taking a lawyer with me, and a perſon to attend on the child, I ſat out for Eaſtbourne: as you have heard Roſalie's account, you know that I ſaw her but for a moment: I could not indeed bear to look upon her—ſhe was walking with the two women I had heard deſcribed:—I fled from her, and directing my ſon to be brought to me, I haſtened back in a ſtate of diſtraction, weeping over

over the innocent unhappy boy, now accuſing his mother of cruelty, and now proteſting I would never think of her more.

"I believe nothing ſaved me from attempting my own life, but my determined reſolution to obtain ſatisfaction of Walſingham.—I waited a few days longer, and when he was returned, I ſent to him a military friend, whom I met by accident, and who told me he was ſlightly acquainted with Walſingham. I ſtated my complaint, and this friend, Captain Wilmot, carried him a challenge from me, to meet at any hour he appointed the next day.

"When Wilmot came back, he aſſured me, that Walſingham was extremely willing to meet me, if I inſiſted on it; but that he proteſted he knew not for what, having never ſeen Mrs. Montalbert in his life, and being totally unconſcious of having ever done me the leaſt injury. This falſehood only irritated my impatience.—But Wilmot adviſed me to recollect whether there might not be ſome miſtake in

all this? 'I do not,' said he, 'know much of Sommers Walſingham, but I am ſure his courage is not to be doubted; and as to an affair of gallantry, he is much more likely to boaſt of, than to deny it. I am perſuaded, that had he eloped with Mrs. Montalbert, he would very readily have given you the ſatisfaction you demand.'—More enraged than ever at what I could not but think a baſe and cowardly evaſion, and almoſt ready to quarrel with Wilmot himſelf, I was determined to ſeek Walſingham inſtantly, and compel him to give an explanation—but Wilmot, who ſaw that ſome miſchief muſt happen if I did, prevailed upon me to let him return once more to Walſingham.—He came back in about an hour, and declared to me that Walſingham had given him ſuch a detail of the circumſtances of his life for the laſt ſix months, that he was perfectly convinced he had never had the ſlighteſt acquaintance with Mrs. Montalbert.—'Good God!' exclaimed I; 'this is *too* much—did I not trace him from Rome to Genoa;

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do I not know that the woman who accompanied him muſt have been my wife?'

'My dear friend,' ſaid Wilmot, 'Walſingham acknowledges that he had a lady with him, but declares it was not Mrs. Montalbert.—He has told me who it was, and, if you inſiſt upon it, the lady who is not far from hence will ſatisfy you as to her identity. Can you ſuppoſe, Montalbert (added Wilmot, very gravely), that I have ſo little regard for you, or hold your honour of ſo little moment, that I would triſle with, or deceive you? If you inſiſt on fighting, I am ready to attend you.—But I repeat, that in the grounds of this quarrel I do believe you are wrong.'—I knew Wilmot to be a man of unblemiſhed honour, and of undoubted courage; and though it yet ſeemed impoſſible that I could be deceived, I heſitated. At that moment Charles Vyvian came to me.

'Not leſs raſh, or leſs irritated than myſelf, for he had read Sommers Walſingham's letter, Wilmot (who was even more acquainted with him than with me), had

had the greateſt difficulty imaginable to perſuade him to hear what he had to ſay. At length it was ſettled, that as he knew the perſon of my wife, he ſhould go with Wilmot to the lady; and if he was convinced that ſhe had accompanied Walſingham from Italy, which he thought he ſhould eaſily diſcover, it was agreed that I could have no quarrel with him.—This lady was at a ſmall town, about twenty miles from Brighthelmſtone, on the London road; and thither my friends repaired, with the conſent of Sommers Walſingham. Towards evening I expected their return; I went out alone upon the hills, where I was accoſted by a gentleman, whom my ſervant had, at his own requeſt, accompanied in ſearch of me. He told me, with very little preface, that his name was Walſingham; that on hearing I was in ſearch of him, and that ſome diſagreeable circumſtances were likely to happen by my having miſtaken for him a relation of the ſame name, he had come from Eaſtbourne on purpoſe to give me the explanation I demanded.

demanded. I will not repeat to you the manner in which I treated Mr. Walſingham; my trembling ſervant, who dared not diſobey me, brought the loaded piſtols I ſent him for; I abſolutely refuſed to hear what Walſingham would have ſaid.—The words, 'I came from Eaſtbourne;' and '*it* WAS *I—who accompanied Mrs. Montalbert from Italy*,' were enough for me.—When he found me deaf to his intended vindication, he took a piſtol, and bade me fire mine.—I did ſo—with too good an aim! the ball lodged in his ſide; he did not however fall: but firing his piſtol in the air, he beckoned to my ſervant, whom I had driven with menaces to ſome diſtance; the poor fellow ran to him, and Walſingham, who had thrown away his piſtol, leaning againſt him, ſaid, 'I am wounded—I believe mortally: lay me on the ground, go call ſome perſons to be witneſſes that your maſter has acted like a man of honour, and that I acquit him of my death.'—I had in the mean time approached him; and guilty as I ſtill believed him,

him, I could not ſee the paleneſs of death on his face without anguiſh and remorſe; he was lying on the ground, and ſeemed, amidſt the pain which his countenance expreſſed, more ſolicitous for my ſafety than for his own life.—Touched by his generoſity, I bade my man fly for ſurgeons: and when he was gone, I knelt by the ſuffering Walſingham with ſenſations of mingled rage and regret, which cannot be deſcribed, while he thus ſpoke to me:

'Mr. Montalbert, it is probable I have but a few hours to live:—hear me, I conjure you, when I declare upon the honour of a dying man, that your wife is as innocent as an angel; that I have ever treated her as a beloved ſiſter; and that you will be guilty of the moſt cruel injuſtice in throwing her from you. I have not breath to tell you by what ſtrange circumſtance it happened that I was the inſtrument to releaſe her from the power of your mother, who had confined her at Formiſcuſa. I feel very faint.—They tell me you have taken your child from her, and that ſhe

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is reduced to the brink of the grave by ſorrow..... Reſtore her child—reſtore to her your affections, and try to make her happy—ſhe deſerves all your tenderneſs; and—if it ſhould happen, as I am perſuaded it will, that you are convinced you have been too raſh—let not any remorſe for what has happened diſturb your tranquillity.—*I* am a being, who have long been weary of life—and for me Death has no horrors.—*You* may for many years conſtitute and ſhare the happineſs of an amiable woman; and it is ſome ſatisfaction to me, to think you will one day know that I was incapable of injuring you.'

" He ſpoke ſlowly and with difficulty—*I* was incapable of anſwering!—but again he earneſtly urged me to ſave myſelf by flight.—I incoherently told him, I hoped his wound was not mortal.—' I hope not, (ſaid he)—but if it ſhould, I intreat you, for the ſake of Mrs. Montalbert, to take care of yourſelf.'—By this time my ſervant was come up with a ſurgeon; before he could decide whether the wound was likely

likely to be fatal, or how he could attempt moving poor Walſingham, Sommers Walſingham, Wilmot, and Vyvian, arrived together with a chair, which they had the precaution to bring with them.

"I cannot relate what now paſſed.—Before the wounded man would conſent to be moved, he inſiſted that the perſons preſent ſhould liſten to the ſolemn declaration he made, that I had uſed him honourably, and was in no way to blame. I own this magnanimity, from a man whom I have perhaps injured, has deeply affected me. He bade my friends inſiſt on my leaving the place, and Vyvian, I hardly knew how, forced me into a poſt chaiſe as ſoon as he had ſeen Walſingham's wound probed; for, till he had brought me ſome intelligence of him, I would not ſtir.—The ſurgeon had not yet attempted to extract the ball; nor could they pronounce with any certainty, but they entertained great fears for his life. Sommers Walſingham went off to London expreſs, to bring down ſome very eminent man of the

the profeſſion; and at the repeated intreaties of Walſingham I came hither, without, however, meaning to withdraw myſelf from any inquiry that may be made—if he dies! ------

'You will, I fear, have too much reaſon to reproach yourſelf, (interrupted Leſſington).——You never received then a letter, which, from her journal, I ſee our poor Roſalie ſent to you from Marſeilles, under cover to the Engliſh Ambaſſador at Naples?'

'Never! (replied Montalbert).—But has my wife then kept a journal—and may I not ſee it?'

'If you will be calm, (ſaid Leſſington), I will put it into your hands.'——Montalbert, ſubdued as he was, and beginning to be conſcious of his own raſhneſs, promiſed all that was aſked of him; and in this peruſal paſſed the reſt of the night; Leſſington continually going to the door of Roſalie's chamber, where he found her much more quiet than he had ventured to expect.

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At a very early hour of the morning, two poſt chaiſes ſtopped near the houſe. From one of them came Vyvian, with the little Montalbert and his maid; from the other, the phyſician who had attended Roſalie..... Poor Montalbert ſaw them enter without having the power to ſpeak. He queſtioned by looks the countenance of Vyvian, but found nothing that encouraged him to aſk after Walſingham.—Vyvian, however, underſtood him, and ſaid, "Walſingham is alive, and his caſe not deſperate, though certainly dangerous."

"Thank God! (exclaimed Montalbert), I may yet then taſte of ſatisfaction!"—"Be not too ſanguine, (anſwered Vyvian); but I am all impatience to know the ſtate of our poor Roſalie!"—Overcome by ſenſations ſo acute and various, Montalbert ſat in breathleſs anxiety; his tears fell on the face of his child as he preſſed him to his heart, and he caſt an earneſt look towards the door, as he heard the ſteps of the phyſician deſcending from Roſalie's room.

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He gave, however, a better account of her than they had dared to promiſe themſelves; and, as he had heard from Vyvian a ſketch of her ſtory in conſequence of his attendance on Walſingham, he ventured to adviſe that Roſalie might, as ſoon as poſſible, have her child reſtored to her, and be told that her huſband was returned.

"Mrs. Montalbert's illneſs, (ſaid he), is ſo evidently occaſioned by uneaſineſs and fear, that my art can do nothing while thoſe cauſes exiſt; remove them, and ſhe will ſoon, I believe, be reſtored to health."

Montalbert then ventured to ſay—"But, Sir, if this unfortunate Mr. Walſingham ſhould die?"

"I hope, though I cannot ſay he will not!" anſwered Dr. F———.

"But at all events, (interrupted Ormſby, who having heard what had paſſed, now joined them)—at all events let my daughter ſee her little boy; and you, Sir, (continued he, turning to Montalbert)—you, I hope, will now do her juſtice—you will."

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"It is not yet time, dear Mr. Ormſby, (ſaid Leſſington), to diſcuſs many points, which, I hope, we ſhall amicably talk over hereafter..... Mr. Montalbert allows that the conduct of my ſiſter has been unexceptionable, and that of Mr. Walſingham moſt generous."

"It is I only, (ſaid Montalbert, in a mournful and ſomewhat ſtern voice)—it is I alone who have been to blame."

Leſſington, fearful of what might follow, cried haſtily—"We can none of us think that.—Alas! which of us, ſituated as you were, might not have acted as you did!"

Dr. F——— now departed, promiſing to ſend a meſſenger from Brighthelmſtone, with the opinion of the ſurgeons, as ſoon as the gentleman (Sommers Walſingham) expected was arrived; and Leſſington went up to prepare Roſalie for the ſight of her child.

She had no ſooner in her arms this darling of her affections, than ſhe ſeemed to have obtained a new exiſtence. Leſſington

ton thought he might then venture to tell her, at leaſt a part, of what had paſſed, concealing, however, the ſad effects of Montalbert's paſſionate ſuſpicions.

When he told her, her huſband was in the houſe, ſhe declared herſelf able to ſee him—for the ſlight view ſhe had of him before ſeemed like a dream. She no ſooner beheld him, than ſhe attempted, but vainly attempted, to ſpeak, while he, far from yielding to thoſe tranſports of joy which he would have felt had not Walſingham been in danger, was wretched, though apparently reſtored to the boſom of happineſs; and ſhuddered, as he thought, that Roſalie was perhaps embracing the murderer of her generous preſerver, and one who might ſoon be an exile from her and from his country!

This painful ſuſpenſe continued ſome days, for the ſituation of Walſingham was long doubtful after the arrival of his ſurgeon from London. Roſalie, though ſhe did not yet leave her room, for ſhe continued extremely weak, could not fail to

remark

remark the gloom that hung over her friends, and particularly Montalbert, who often fell into deep and melancholy reveries; then, ſuddenly ſtarting, liſtened to any noiſe in the houſe, watched every one entering at the door, and ſeemed frequently ſo uneaſy, that Roſalie, however, willing to impute his inquietude to the ſituation he was in with regard to his mother, which he had told her of, could not but diſcover that ſomething of more immediate import preſſed on his mind; ſhe had never ventured ſince their reconciliation to name Walſingham.—Too well aware from the ſlight and half-ſtifled narrative ſhe had received from her brother and her father, that Montalbert's jealouſy had been the cauſe of the ſtep he had taken as to her child, ſhe feared to awaken it anew by naming him, while Montalbert, obſerving her caution, felt hurt that ſhe did not ſpeak of him openly and candidly—and theſe concealed ſenſations on both ſides occaſioned a ſort of reſtraint that rendered them far from happy.

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As Roſalie every day became better, and thought herſelf well enough to leave a place which reminded her of many days of ſuſpenſe and uneaſineſs, ſhe felt ſome ſurpriſe that neither her father nor Montalbert propoſed her removal, for they had concealed from her their debates on this ſubject, which had not paſſed without ſome aſperity on Montalbert's part. Conſcious of high birth, and of his right to an ample property, he did not reflect, without bitterneſs of heart, on his reverſe of fortune.—Inſtead of raiſing his wife to high affluence, he found himſelf and his ſon now almoſt entirely dependent on Mr. Ormſby, who, though related to him by blood, the notions he had acquired among foreign nobility taught him to conſider as a merchant and an adventurer for gain. Ormſby, on the other hand, had been ſo long uſed to the moſt perfect obedience to his will from every body about him, that he was hurt at the little ſubmiſſion which Montalbert ſhewed to his wiſhes, when he expreſſed an intention of making a conſi-

derable purchaſe, and placing Roſalie as miſtreſs of his houſe and fortune. Montalbert fancied that Ormſby would not be ſorry if the fatal termination of Walſingham's accident compelled him to go abroad; but ſecretly determined, if it did, that no conſiderations of intereſt ſhould induce him to leave his wife and child in England.—Ormſby was not only conſcious that he ſhould have been happier to have found his daughter ſingle, but fancied the ſentiment juſtified by the pride and violence which he thought natural to Montalbert's character.

Theſe heart-burnings between two perſons, on whom the happineſs of Roſalie ſo entirely depended, gave extreme concern to Leſſington, and kept him from returning home, notwithſtanding the repeated letters he received from his wife. Vyvian ſaw with equal concern that there was no cordiality between them; but the ſituation of Walſingham, whom he had twice viſited, and whoſe character had impreſſed

preſſed him with the higheſt eſteem, was a ſource of ſtill deeper regret.

How ſtrange is the diſpoſition of human events! Roſalie, who but a very few days back ſuffered every poſſible calamity, now ſaw her huſband returned, her child reſtored, her father in ſafety, and maſter of an ample fortune (circumſtances which even in her moſt ſanguine moments ſhe never ventured to flatter herſelf with); yet, with all theſe bleſſings united, Roſalie was not happy; and had ſhe known the ſituation of Walſingham, would have been extremely miſerable.

Convinced, however, that ſomething very ſerious occaſioned the reſtleſſneſs and anxiety which ſeemed to increaſe on every face that approached her, from ſome unguarded expreſſions, as well as from the extreme ſolicitude with which they had been explained away, Roſalie caught ſome vague ſuſpicions of the truth, ſhe contrived to queſtion Claudine ſo narrowly, that the poor girl, who had long been

ſadly overweighed with the ſecret, burſt into tears, and diſcloſed all ſhe knew.

Diſqualified as Roſalie was to bear ſuch a ſhock, the neceſſity of ſupporting it with calmneſs immediately occurred to her. Claudine, already terrified at what ſhe had done, beſought her to ſay nothing to Mr. Ormſby, whom ſhe heard upon the ſtairs—but her countenance betrayed too evidently what paſſed: hardly, however, had ſhe time to attempt evading her father's queſtions, when Montalbert appeared, and the neceſſity of her artificial tranquillity became more preſſing. Vyvian and Leſſington were walking; ſomething like converſation was attempted between Ormſby and Montalbert, but it would have flagged, if Claudine, who dreaded their obſervations, had not opportunely brought the child, in whom they all took an equal intereſt. A packet, however, was brought into the room by the miſtake of a ſervant, on which Montalbert had no ſooner caſt his eyes, than he changed countenance, and betrayed ſuch violent emotion, that

Roſalie,

Roſalie, concluding Walſingham was dead, had only reſolution enough left to avoid betraying, otherwiſe than by her features, the extreme pain this idea gave her. Montalbert, trembling with impatient dread, tore the letter half open: then recollecting himſelf, haſtened out of the room, and Ormſby, who gueſſed that it brought ſome fatal intelligence, followed him.

The letter, however, inſtead of bringing to Montalbert the cruel intelligence he expected, was to this effect:

"DEAR SIR,

"I have inſiſted on being allowed to write this letter, to ſatisfy thoſe fears which the people about me have, I know, given you. My friend Bernard permits me to tell you myſelf, that he believes I ſhall in a few days be well enough to remove by ſlow journies to London, whither his buſineſs calls him ſo preſſingly, that he can no longer attend me here; and as we have been friends from our childhood, I find myſelf ſo much happier in his than in other

hands, whatever may be their ſkill, that I am reſolved to accompany him. You will conclude from this, that all the dangerous ſymptoms which have hung about me are removed; and I truſt that the pain this affair has given you will no longer interrupt your preſent happineſs.—For you muſt be happy, Montalbert, with ſo amiable a woman!

"As ſoon as I am quite well I ſhall return to the Continent.—Conſider whether I can do you any ſervice with Signora Belcaſtro. Is it not poſſible, that, from miſrepreſentations, her general prejudice may have been raiſed into particular diſlike?—I own to you, that from Mrs. Montalbert's account, as well as from other circumſtances, I fear Alozzi has been leſs ſincerely your friend than you have believed. Perhaps I may be the fortunate means of undeceiving your mother; and you will really oblige me, by giving me an opportunity of being uſeful to you, either in this or in any other way.

"If

" If Vyvian would come over to ſee me, before I go, it would give me pleaſure.—I hope our friendſhip, however unpleaſantly begun, will be permanent.—Permit me to offer to Mrs. Montalbert my moſt reſpectful good wiſhes; my dear little ward and fellow-traveller, is not old enough to remember me, but I ſhall always recollect him with pleaſure. Adieu, dear Sir, I have exceeded Bernard's permiſſion, and muſt haſtily aſſure you, that I am your moſt faithful ſervant,

" F. WALSINGHAM."

This letter, though evidently written in pain and languor, took from the heart of Montalbert ſuch a weight, that he ſeemed ſuddenly reſtored to happineſs and reaſon. He determined to go over himſelf with Vyvian to viſit this generous man, who had ſuffered ſo much for his ineſtimable ſervices, and unparalleled goodneſs, and, forgetting all his former precautions, he was haſtening to ſhew the letter to Roſalie, as ſoon as her father had read it,

when the entrance of Leſſington and Vyvian prevented him.

Montalbert and Vyvian agreed to ſet out immediately, and Leſſington undertook to relate to Roſalie the truths which had been ſo long concealed from her.—He found her already informed of all but the late relief from their apprehenſions. She could not hear of the ſufferings of her benefactor, and of his unexampled generoſity, without great emotion: Leſſington bade her indulge it, but ſtill fearing leſt Montalbert ſhould again feel ſuſpicions, which had already coſt him ſo much, ſhe tried to check her tears when Montalbert appeared—but it was impoſſible. And he, by a thouſand tender apologies, intreated her to forgive his raſhneſs and injuſtice, and encouraged her to indulge thoſe tears, which a little relieved her oppreſſed heart.

Montalbert, Leſſington, and Vyvian, now ſet out on their viſit; the two latter took leave of Roſalie: Leſſington returning into

into Oxfordſhire, and Vyvian having determined to accompany Walſingham to London.

During the ſhort abſence of her huſband, Ormſby talked over with his daughter their future plans of life. It was probable that Montalbert, however his pride might be hurt, would not now oppoſe the wiſhes of Ormſby, who ſeemed to place all his ſatisfaction in beſtowing on his daughter a degree of affluence, which ſhould ſet her even above the daughters of Vyvian, who had deſpiſed and contemned her: but Roſalie repreſented to her father, that, beyond a certain point, fortune contributed nothing to real happineſs; that whatever attracted towards her the eyes of the world, would quicken the envy and malignity with which her ſtory would be related, and could not fail to reflect on the beloved memory of her mother. To this argument Ormſby was compelled to yield, and he found himſelf under the neceſſity, however painful, of continuing to conceal from the world the relationſhip in which he

he ſtood to Roſalie, wiſhing it to remain as much a ſecret as a circumſtance could do already known to ſo many perſons, and which, during Roſalie's illneſs, no pains had been taken to conceal.

Montalbert returned more deeply impreſſed than ever with the generoſity of Walſingham. He had, however, paid all the pecuniary obligations Roſalie owed him, and they parted with mutual profeſſions of friendſhip.

In a few days afterwards Mr. and Mrs. Montalbert, and their little boy, went round the coaſt into Kent, and took a houſe near Margate for the reſt of the ſummer, while Ormſby made a tour through the weſtern counties in ſearch of a purchaſe for his daughter, where, at a ſmall diſtance, he might find a reſidence for himſelf.

Montalbert, whoſe natural infirmities of temper had been chaſtiſed and corrected by the events which had ſo nearly deprived him of the felicity he enjoyed, ſeemed now to think that he could never make ſufficient amends

amends to his charming wife for the injury he had done her, by giving way to ſuſpicions ſhe ſo little deſerved. About three months after his removal to London, Walſingham went to Italy, where, by means of ſome Italian friends of high rank, he procured an introduction to Signora Belcaſtro, and gradually contrived to inform her of the ſhare he had had in delivering her daughter-in-law from her uſurped power, while he undeceived her in regard to many repreſentations made by Alozzi, who, finding himſelf baffled in deſigns, which the abſence and probable death of Montalbert had occaſioned him to form, had really been, in his turn, the dupe of Signora Belcaſtro, and had followed the ſcent ſhe had arfully given, that Roſalie had eloped with an Engliſhman.——Walſingham acquired ſo much influence over the mind of this ſtrange woman, that though he could not prevail upon her to forgive her ſon for having married as he did, ſhe at length relented in favour of his children, and

ſettled

ſettled upon them what ſhe had intended for their father, to whom, however, her pride and Walſingham's perſuaſions prevailed upon her to allow a handſome annual income.

Montalbert enjoyed, at a ſmall but beautiful place on the coaſt of Dorſetſhire, with which Ormſby had preſented his wife, more happineſs than uſually falls to the lot of humanity. Roſalie paſſed her life in ſtudying how to contribute to his felicity, and that of her father, and, by her ſweetneſs and attention, ſhe won them both from thoſe little aſperities and difference of temper which had once threatened to deſtroy their domeſtic comfort.

But notwithſtanding the cheerful and even gay letters which Walſingham wrote to his friends, letters which greatly contributed to the happineſs of Roſalie, who retained for him the moſt grateful regard, he was ſtill an unhappy wanderer; and when he had done all he could to reſtore Montalbert to his mother's favour, and

was

was no longer animated by the hope of ſerving Roſalie, he ſunk again into that cold deſpondence, which a ſenſible heart feels when the world around is as a deſart. The agonies with which he had wept over the grave of his Leonora had been ſuſpended by the almoſt imperceptible attachment which had crept into his boſom for Roſalie, and which he had indulged but too much, after there appeared ſome probability that Montalbert was no more.

The laſt letters he wrote to England informed his friends that he was ſetting out on a tour through Spain and Portugal; and that finding himſelf more than ever diſpoſed to wander, he thought it not improbable but that he might go from thence to the Cape, and ſo to the Eaſt Indies.——In the purſuit of ſcience and knowledge he found conſolation, when no benevolent action offered itſelf to ſatisfy his philanthrophy; but ſo generally is miſery diffuſed, that there were few places which did not offer objects for this indulgence—though none could intereſt him like

like the amiable Being whom he had released from the dreary confinement of Formiscusa, and restored to the possession of the happiness she now enjoyed—a happiness which alone could soften the sadness of his own destiny!!!

THE END.

DEC 7 1938